

EDUCATION



Schools in the front line, PAGE 33

For your pleasure...

David Sinclair on the Roxy Music retrospective ARTS, PAGE 31

Take a deep breath ladies

Julia Llewellyn Smith on the return of the corset PAGE 15

Suited to comedy

Valerie Grove on the rise of Jack Dee PAGE 14

Race hate inquiry on riot speeches

'Incitement to violence' is attacked by Yard chief

BY RICHARD FORD, STEWART TENDLER AND STEPHEN FARRELL

SIR PAUL CONDON last night launched a criminal investigation into inflammatory speeches which he claimed incited people to riot and attack the police in Brixton on Wednesday night.

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner condemned the "thugs" who caused £1 million of damage, but he saved his strongest language for those he accused of fanning the flames of hatred with their speeches outside Brixton police station.

He said that speakers at a vigil protesting about the death of a black man in police custody could face criminal charges if they were found to have incited people to cause trouble in the south London borough.

"I think what was unforgivable was the inflammatory speeches by people outside the police station," he said. "They could have acted responsibly but they actually incited violence and we will certainly have a criminal inquiry into this aspect of what happened."

The police are expected to send a report to the Crown Prosecution Service, but no immediate action is likely while tensions remain high.

Sir Paul mentioned nobody by name, but police are studying a leaflet put out by the disgraced barrister Rudy Narayan, calling for people to take down the registration numbers of Brixton police officers' cars and list their home addresses.

Mr Narayan told the gathering on Wednesday: "The Brixton police are killers and they will not understand what they have done until one of them has been killed." And last night he declared that his speech was "no more inflammatory than killing a man in police custody."

Mr Narayan had been speaking at the vigil organised by the National Black Caucus for Wayne Douglas who died after being arrested for alleged aggravated burglary last week. Riots erupted afterwards in which 12 people were

injured and 22 arrested. Shops, a garage and public houses were attacked and looted, vehicles set on fire and shots were fired.

Last night, as hundreds of extra officers stood by in case of further trouble, Michael Howard appealed for calm. After touring the riot scene, the Home Secretary said: "There can be no excuse whatsoever for the lawlessness which took place in Brixton."

He had spoken to community leaders and he was sure that the overwhelming majority were very angry about what had happened, they were "building a new Brixton, a better Brixton, a Brixton offering better opportunities and hope for the residents."

Labour also condemned the rioting and Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, said: "Of course Brixton, like other inner city areas, has many social and economic disadvantages. But criminal activity like last night's can only worsen Brixton's problems, not improve them."

Keith Hill and Kate Hock, both local Labour MPs, also criticised the violence, saying that the vast majority of local people would deplore the action, which had damaged businesses and local incomes.

Wayne Douglas's brother, Albert, blamed the police for the rioting, however, saying: "I think this was as a result of the youths of Brixton being constantly arrested. People are very angry about the death of my brother and they wanted to do something about it. The police need to be aware of the needs of the youths on the streets, here is nothing being done for them and they feel frustration."

Lee Jasper, the head of the National Black Caucus, repeated his calls for an inquiry into Mr Douglas's death and said: "Last night was nothing really. It was a minor blip, but

Continued on page 3, col 1

Rich pickings, page 3
Paul Barker, page 16
Leading article, page 17



Narayan: urged protesters to note policemen's home addresses and car registrations

'If a policeman is killed because he is behaving badly I will not fret'

BY RICHARD FORD

RUDY NARAYAN, the struck-off black barrister who helped to organise the vigil outside Brixton police station for Wayne Douglas, the burglary suspect who died in custody, told the crowd: "The Brixton police are killers and they will not understand what they have done until one of them has been killed."

"The police are using public money and public equipment to kill black people. If a policeman is killed because he is behaving badly I will not fret."

Mr Narayan, 57, also handed out leaflets urging people to take down the registration numbers of Brixton police officers' cars and list their home addresses.

The leaflet, headed *Civil Rights (UK) Ltd*, says: "Wayne Douglas's Christmas

present from Brixton police was death! What will Brixton's black community give Brixton police for Christmas?"

"Brixton Police are clearly led and incited from within by the most vicious racist killers the black community has ever seen."

"It is high time that Brixton Police was made fully accountable for this MURDER. All the officers concerned should be charged with MURDER. The Chief Officer of Brixton Police Station should be sacked forthwith."

Mr Narayan said yesterday: "It would be a great honour to be prosecuted for incitement or any thing else arising out of this. I don't think the police realise the sting of death that they deal to this community before Christmas. I think were they to continue with the present confrontational tactics sooner or later a policeman is going to be killed and then all hell will break loose."

Wayne Douglas's Christmas present from Brixton

Police was DEATH. What will Brixton's black community give Brixton Police for Christmas? We can start by taking down the registration numbers of Brixton Police officers' motor cars ... we can also list their private home addresses. There is no doubt that immediate and severe action is required before Brixton Police will kill again. Stop the serial killers policing Lambeth's streets."

Mr Narayan said yesterday: "It would be a great honour to be prosecuted for incitement or any thing else arising out of this. I don't think the police realise the sting of death that they deal to this community before Christmas. I think were they to continue with the present confrontational tactics sooner or later a policeman is going to be killed and then all hell will break loose."

Wayne Douglas's Christmas present from Brixton

Wayne Douglas's Christmas



Tishaw: "I didn't think I was going to die. I'm too much of an optimist"

'I got dragged off my bike and just got one hell of a kicking'

BY JOANNA BALE

A POLICEMAN described yesterday how he was dragged off his motorcycle and beaten by rioters in Brixton.

PC John Tishaw, 39, suffered a broken collar bone when he was mobbed by a gang of youths as he directed traffic on Wednesday. He said: "We were on the junction of Acre Lane and Brixton Road directing traffic and the trouble had been bubbling over for the best part of the evening. As we started to move out I wasn't quick enough and 20 or 30 came at me from behind. Before I knew what had happened I got dragged off my bike and I really just got one hell of a kicking."

"I had the crash helmet on, which was quite lucky because I can remember two or three fairly substantial kicks into the helmet. I don't know how

long it went on for, but there were five or six people, white or coloured I just don't know."

A motorist drove at the crowd, forcing it to disperse so that PC Tishaw could be saved and yesterday he was recovering in hospital.

Asked what was going through his mind, he said:

"Once you're rolling down on the floor and getting kicked right, left and centre, self-preservation takes over. I thought 'How am I going to get out of this?' I didn't think I was going to die but perhaps that's because I'm too much of an optimist. I just felt frightened by it."

Fall in inflation boosts markets

Inflation fell again in November, setting a record for the longest peacetime run of low prices since the 1950s.

The headline rate fell to 3.1 per cent from 3.2 per cent, vindicating Kenneth Clarke's decision to cut base rates. The news further boosted financial markets with the FTSE 100 index hitting a new high of 3,683.7 before easing back to close 9.2 points higher at 3,671.6.

Page 21

Major faces snub on single currency

BY PHILIP WEBSTER IN MADRID AND GEORGE BROCK

BRITAIN'S doubts over a single European currency were reinforced last night as John Major arrived in Madrid for a two-day summit that will be dominated by the issue of monetary union.

The Prime Minister, speaking in the Spanish capital, said that it was "absolutely imperative" that the European Union should carry out a full-scale study into the implications of a single currency going ahead with only a few countries as members. He said that the Union had so far failed to grasp the implications of only a minority of countries such as France and Germany joining a single currency.

The Government's sceptical line had earlier been underlined when Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, spoke of the "sacrifice of national control" that would be involved in a single currency. As the

summit today decides on the name of a future single currency, with Euro the favourite, Mr Major is to concentrate on a call for a far-reaching study of the pitfalls of monetary union if only a handful of countries can join.

While the Prime Minister is likely to win his study, the Union is expected to and confirm January 1 1999 as the starting date. In an interview with *The Times* yesterday Mr Rifkind adopted his most sceptical tone about a single currency. He said: "Everyone accepts that monetary union means that national parliaments and national governments would no longer be able to have control over, or even a dominant influence on, a whole range of monetary decisions and economic decisions as a consequence."

Countdown to EMU, page 10

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



Win a £3,500 mini Mercedes sports, in Car 95

90 for the 1990s: the artists of the decade, in the Magazine

Complete guide to Christmas and New Year TV and radio, in a double issue of Vision

Bosnia pact signed but attacks go on

FROM BEN MCINTYRE IN PARIS

AT midday yesterday the Presidents of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia signed the Bosnia-Herzegovina Peace Accord, formally bringing to an end a bloody conflict that has redrawn the map of Europe, leaving more than 200,000 dead and nearly three million homeless.

But as the leaders of the former Yugoslav republics were preparing to shake hands over the pact at the Elysee Palace in Paris, a French United Nations helicopter was hit by gunfire from Bosnian government troops, an attack that indicates just how elusive a lasting peace may be in the war-shattered Balkans.

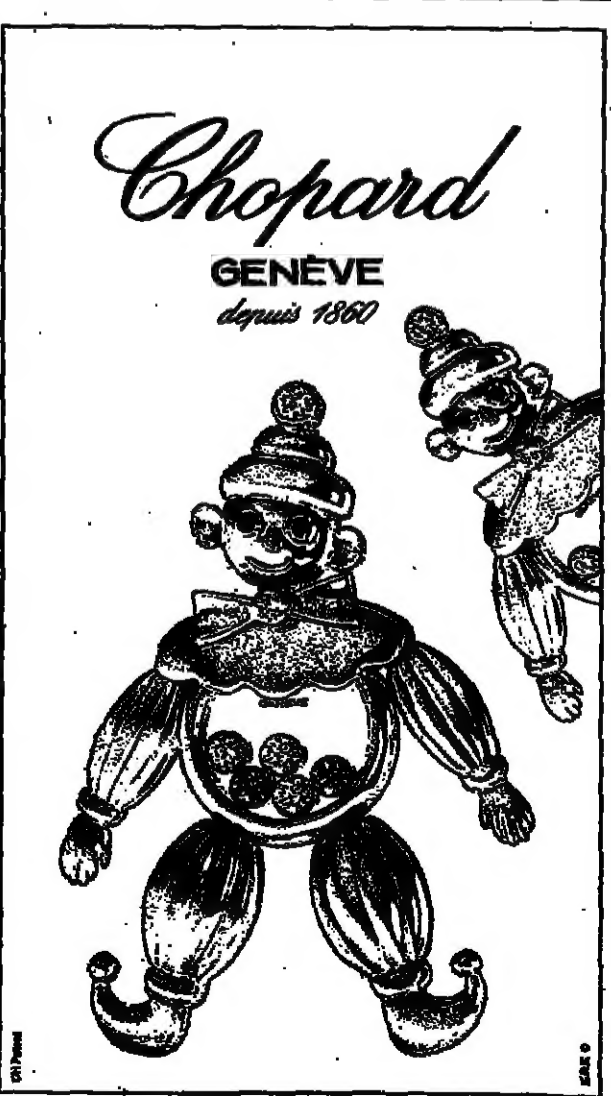
"Bosnia must find a way, with God's grace, to lay down the hatred, to give up the revenge, to go forward together," President Clinton said as he joined John Major, Helmut

Kohl, the German Chancellor, and more than 50 other world leaders to witness yesterday's signing ceremony, at which the host was President Chirac of France.

After signing the agreement with President Milosevic of Serbia and President Tudjman of Croatia, President Izetbegovic of Bosnia told the assembled dignitaries: "I feel like a man swallowing a bitter but useful medicine, but I can assure you we are signing this peace treaty with sincerity."

The French UN helicopter had to make an emergency landing after it was hit by small arms fire as it flew to the aid of 20 Bosnian army troops trapped by heavy snow. There were no injuries and no immediate indication of why the Bosnian troops had opened fire.

War's formal end, page 11



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TV & RADIO	38, 39
WEATHER	20
CROSSWORDS	20, 40

LETTERS	17
OBITUARIES	19
BERNARD LEVIN	16

ARTS	29-31
CHESS & BRIDGE	36
COURT & SOCIAL	18

SPORT	35-38, 40
EDUCATION	33
LAW REPORT	34

Basque-baiting triggers battle of the Barbies

I was the battle of the blondes at the Commons yesterday. From the front bench, lips pursed and eyes aflame, rose a gorgeous, pouting, hair-tossing creature, impeccably coiffed. And that was just Michael Heseltine. Ready for battle opposite him was the honey-blond Shadow Leader of the House, Labour's Ann Taylor. Ash-blond vs honey-blond: Barbie vs Barbie.

Mr Heseltine was standing in for the Prime Minister, away in Europe. But Ann Taylor? MPs scratched their heads. Where was Labour's Deputy Leader, John Prescott, who normally serves in Tony Blair's place when there isn't a real PM to question? Had

Prescott done a Stephen Fry after those mixed reviews of his Budget debate performance?

Wild rumours swept the Press Gallery. One of these was that seasonal influenza had taken its toll on the Hansard room. Being unable to field a full army of parliamentary reporters, the Editor of Hansard had begged Labour's high command not to send John Prescott into the chamber, because reinforcements were simply not available should stenographers fall in battle against Mr Prescott's syntax, as stenographers often do, being carried on stretchers from the Reporters' Gallery.

The truth, it turned out, was only slightly less exotic. Prescott



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

cott was in Madrid. It seems there is an international socialist conference there, and Blair's deputy is representing the Labour Party. Our hearts went out to the Madrid team of simultaneous translators, quaking in their headphones, awaiting Mr Prescott's arrival. To test their mettle, they might try simultaneously translating this from that budget speech into Spanish, Catalan and Basque...

(Senor Juan Prescott: "And then of course there was the night the other question of

the assault this weekend on people's attitudes and minds about the approach to the Budget."

Que? Or they could try: "...and we'll come to in a second, just because the Hon Member has discovered private finance initiatives, let us tell him, we were talking about this Dispatch Box when the Government was constantly telling us you couldn't have, and..." The thought occurs that Mr Prescott's speeches may in fact have been translated from the Basque. In his

place yesterday, Ann Taylor confidently berated Michael Heseltine over what she alleged was the cost of rail privatisation. Heseltine dealt in relaxed style with her enquiries, and was hinting most questions for easy twos, when an unexpected opportunity for a six came his way.

It was on the last question, from another Ann: Ann Clwyd, former overseas aid spokesman, sacked by Tony Blair earlier this year. Bitterness flared. Clwyd's harpoon, ostensibly aimed at Heseltine, sank itself instead into "new" Labour. Tower Colliery in her constituency, she told the House, which Heseltine had once wanted to close, had just returned a £3

million profit after reopening as a co-operative. That proved what you could do "if you give the workers control of the means of production". Hezza wailed in.

Spin doctors quailed. Peter Mandelson (Lab. new, blanching a whiter shade. Thoroughly Modern. Mo Mowlam rushed out — no doubt for her mobile phone. "Tony! Quick! Come back! You leave the House for just one afternoon and the Left are all over the shop!"

When her pit was threatened, Ms Clwyd staged a protest sit-in at the bottom of a minishaft. To judge by the look on Mandelson's face she may soon be back there.

Pill scare fruitless says The Lancet

Women who changed their brand of contraceptive pill after a government safety warning last month need not have done so, a specialist has said. Four research reports to be published in *The Lancet* tomorrow, which formed the basis of the Government warning, show that certain brands of the Pill double the risk of blood clots in leg veins. However, the absolute risk of taking these brands is one extra death in one million users each year.

Dr Noel Weiss of the University of Washington, says it is uncertain whether some women are at much higher risk of clots or whether the pills reduce the risk of other serious conditions. Until this information is available, "women will not have a sound basis for making a decision".

Sex change ruling

A British school worker who was dismissed after having a sex change should not have been sacked, the European Court ruled yesterday. The transsexual was a man when he was hired by a Cornish school, but was fired soon after announcing his intention to become a woman. The court said transsexuals were entitled to protection under the 1976 Equal Opportunities directive.

TV licence mistake

The Heritage Department has admitted asking 50p too much for next year's television licences. An "administrative error" resulted in the price of a colour licence being announced to Parliament two weeks ago as £90 when the figure should have been £89.50, heritage minister Sebastian Coe said. Black and white licences will still be £90 after April 1, he said.

RUC overtime halved

RUC overtime was cut by 50 per cent in the year to June, saving almost £8.5 million, because of the IRA and loyalist ceasefires, the Police Authority for Northern Ireland said. The "peace dividend" meant that the authority underspent its budget of £621 million by £20 million in total. The Northern Ireland Office has confirmed that the 150-year-old Crumlin Road prison in Belfast is to close next spring.

Buried-house man freed

A man jailed a week ago for burying his illegally built house under a mound of earth to fool planning inspectors has been freed by the High Court after apologising for his contempt. The court was told that Trevor Sedgbeer, of Stoke Gabriel, Devon, had issued instructions from Penzance, where he was serving three months, for the house to be demolished. *Bernard Levin, page 16*

Briton 'starved to death'

A British woman appears to have died from thirst and hunger after her Land Rover ran out of fuel as she was driving through a game reserve in Burkina Faso, West Africa. A skeleton found in the vehicle on December 6 has been identified as that of Audrey O'Neill, 55. She is thought to have died in April. Mrs O'Neill, knowing she was dying, is believed to have kept a journal of her last days.

Parkinson's pig cure

Four patients suffering from Parkinson's disease have become the first in the world to have pig cells transplanted into their brains. The treatment for the neurological disorder is being tried by American doctors as an alternative to using brain tissue from human foetuses. The results — which are better than expected — are reported tonight on the BBC1 programme *Tomorrow's World*.

Pilots pick up school's TV

Pilots flying into Heathrow found they could hardly hear air-traffic instructions because of interference from the ground. Department of Trade investigators eventually tracked down the cause of the problem to Maylands primary school at Malden, Essex, whose television booster aerial was both receiving and transmitting signals on the aircrafts' communications frequency.

Privatisation postponed for a year

Student loans delay leaves £100m hole in education budget

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

PLANS to privatise student loans are to be postponed by a year, Eric Forth, the Education Minister, announced yesterday. The delay will prevent the adoption of a new system before the next election.

The announcement, only a week after MPs had begun debating the Bill, leaves a £100 million hole in the Department for Education and Employment's budget for next year. The Chancellor had identified immediate savings from the transfer of liabilities from the Student Loans Company next October.

Ministers had hoped that banks and building societies would take over in the next academic year, but the institutions have proved reluctant to participate. Mr Forth told the Commons committee debating the Bill that private lenders wanted more time to prepare a scheme.

Labour said the announcement proved that the privatisation plan was "a flop". Only



Forth: blamed mergers and new technology

two days ago, the Government had voted down an amendment proposing that the scheme should be delayed.

Debate on the Student Loans Bill will continue on the Government's original timetable, but the target date for implementation will slip to October 1997, after the latest date for a general election. Mr Forth told MPs that complica-

tions presented by bank mergers and new technology were among the reasons. A department spokeswoman said: "We have listened to what the banks had to say during consultation."

Some banks, including the Midland, have already told the Government that they are not prepared to administer student loans at subsidised rates. But the department insisted yesterday that others were interested in the scheme.

However, Bryan Davies, Labour's higher education spokesman, claimed the Government had been forced into the postponement by lack of interest among the major banks. "It is extraordinary that the Government introduced legislation before it had agreement with the banks that any of them were prepared to take part."

A spokesman for the National Union of Students said: "The banks and students themselves saw the flaws in this scheme. Now the Government does as well."

A National Audit Office report disclosed last month that outstanding loans total more than £1 billion, and that the company believes £142 million will never be recovered. The Government is keen for banks and building societies to take much of the strain of loans, leaving the Student Loan Company to act as a safety net.

Last month's Budget settlement assumed savings of £100 million in 1996-97, rising to £200 million the next year and £250 million thereafter. The department acknowledged that the savings would no longer be available.



John Witheridge in front of Eton College chapel, where he is senior chaplain

Eton churchman to head scandal-hit Charterhouse

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Rev John Witheridge, senior chaplain at Eton College, is to be the new Headmaster of Charterhouse school.

The appointment comes three months after Peter Hobson, the former headmaster, resigned amid allegations that he had consorted with a prostitute.

Governors at the £12,000-a-year school in Godalming, Surrey, moved quickly to select a new head and hired NB Selection, a London recruitment agency, to draw up a shortlist of candidates. Mr Witheridge, 42, said yesterday that he faced five and a half hours of interviews.

He dismissed the scandal surrounding Mr Hobson as "an unfortunate incident that has now become history". There would be no need to take any particular action to

repair damage to the school, and Clive Carter, the acting head, was doing a good job. "Morale is high at the school."

Mr Witheridge, once private secretary to the Right Rev Robert (now Lord) Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, will take up the position in September next year.

He was educated at St Albans School and Kent University at Canterbury, where he won a double first in English and theology. He continued his studies at Christ's College, Cambridge, and later at Ridley Hall.

He was a curate in Luton before joining Marlborough College in 1982 as assistant chaplain and head of religious studies. After two years he went to Lambeth Palace and became senior chaplain at Eton in 1987. Earlier this year, he attacked the Church of

England as politically correct, left-wing and sectarian.

In an article published in 100,000 parish magazines, he said: "Women's rights, gay rights, black rights, bias to the poor: you name it, the Church has supported it until Christian theology has begun to sound like sociology, and priests like social workers."

Although many in the Church supported his views, Mr Witheridge did receive one death threat. "It gave me a completely new reputation with the boys," he said.

Mr Witheridge, who lectures on classical history on specialist Mediterranean cruises, is married to Sarah, 40, and has four children. Charlotte, 17 and Harriet, 14, are both at Benenden School in Kent. George, 12, and Henry, 9, are both at Caldicote prep school in Farnham.

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SEIKO KINETIC

Christmas defeat looms for Tories in fishing vote

By JILL SHERMAN AND ALICE THOMSON

A RISK of defeat in the Commons was growing for the Government yesterday, after Ulster Unionists signalled they were ready to join a backbench Tory rebellion on the European fisheries policy.

Five Euro-rebels have indicated that they will abstain or vote against the Government next Tuesday. Three other Euro-sceptics may follow suit, arguing that nothing has changed since a similar vote last January when nine MPs rebelled.

At least two MPs with fishing constituencies have also hinted they may not support John Major in what will prove to be a crucial test of his fragile Commons majority. The Government, now with a majority of only five, could be defeated if only three Tory rebels vote against or six abstain, provided the Opposition parties vote together.

Last night Government whips were already whispering about the danger of a confidence motion. Many MPs saw this as sabre-rattling, but Mr Major would not want a demoralising defeat the day before the Christmas recess.

Business managers switched the vote from Monday to Tuesday, hoping that many Opposition MPs would not be present, having decided to leave early for the Christmas holidays. But last night Labour and the Liberal Democrats confirmed they were applying a three-line whip and the Ulster Unionists indicated that eight of their nine MPs would be present to vote

against the Government. Last January the Ulster Unionists saved the Government from an embarrassing defeat: six of the party voted with the Conservatives while three abstained.

Labour has announced that it will table its own amendment, criticising Britain's negotiating stance on the common fisheries policy. It will be drafted to attract the support of potential Tory rebels. The Liberal Democrats suggested they would support a Labour amendment provided that it was not too anti-European.

Two of the Tories' West Country MPs may also abstain. Robert Hicks, the independent-minded MP for Cornwall South East, is a staunch supporter of the fishermen. He has announced that he is standing down at the next election and party officials are worried that he will not feel the need to toe the party line.

David Harris, Tory MP for St Ives, made it clear in the House yesterday that he was still angry over the Government's refusal to stand up for British fishermen against their Spanish counterparts.

Tory MPs who were planning to leave London on Tuesday morning are said to be furious that a three-line whip has been applied. Whips heard complaints from one MP who had booked his family's flight to the Bahamas, another who should have been off to South Africa, and a dozen more who had organised European trips.

Opinion to be sought on cheap legal work

By FRANCES GIBBS
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Law Society's leaders yesterday drew back from endorsing measures to eradicate cut-price conveyancing. Instead they voted to take leading counsel's opinion.

Solicitors' leaders also voted to canvass the views of the profession in a move that averted a split within the 75-strong governing council of the Law Society.

The decision to proceed cautiously with plans to bring in minimum guideline fees and strip cut-price solicitors of their professional insurance cover was influenced by a letter from Sir Thomas Bingham, the Master of the Rolls, giving warning that any such measure could be unlawful and "contrary to public policy".

Robert Sayer, vice-president of the Law Society, who with Martin Mears, its president, is leading the move for guideline fees and insurance sanctions, said: "We have got what we wanted. The profession will now be asked its views." Mr Sayer said that there were £80 million worth of claims over conveyancing a year. "There is an inherent risk in cut price work — it is not possible to do the job properly."

John Edge, the Bourne-mouth solicitor who is at the forefront of the campaign within the profession for action on cut-price fees, and has the backing of 12,000 solicitors, said: "I am glad the profession is now taking an interest in these matters."

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Brixton riot: peaceful picket over death in cells escalated after inflammatory speech

Rich pickings for looters who used mobile phones

BY STEPHEN FARRELL AND ADRIAN LEE

THE Brixton riot was orchestrated by young men using mobile phones to outflank police and pinpoint lucrative targets. Gangs of looters plundered Christmas stock, taking £110 trainers and designer clothes but ignoring cheaper brands.

A hardware store on Acre Lane was looted of tools and the offices of a Caribbean newspaper above were stripped of expensive computer equipment. The building was then set alight. As clear-

policeman is killed because he is behaving badly I will not fret." His speech provoked chants of "murderers" from the crowd.

Linda Bellas, a former left-wing Labour leader of Lambeth council, told the crowd that the long police batons used during Mr Douglas's arrest last week should be banned. She said: "If this had happened to a white person, the press would be jumping up and down."

Nevertheless, most people began to drift away an hour later, police said, when the organisers "irresponsibly" began a march down Brixton Road. A line of police tried to stop the demonstrators but could not contain them and scuffles broke out during which stones were thrown at the police station.

The first bottle was thrown soon after 8 pm as the crowd reassembled near the Ritzy cinema. Youths appeared from side streets, some wearing masks.

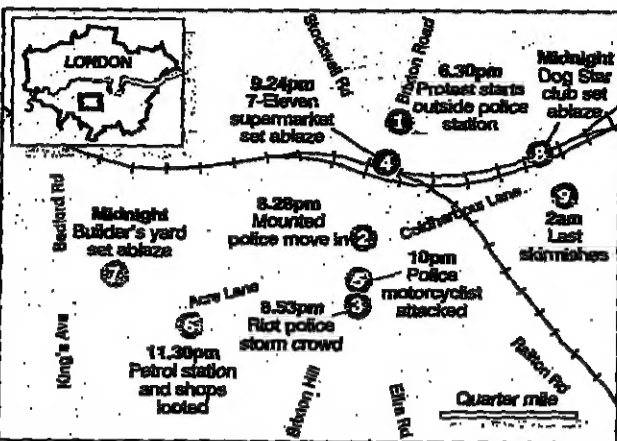
Over the next 90 minutes police, backed by reinforcements carrying riot shields, were caught in a series of running battles in the streets around the centre of Brixton.

The 7-Eleven shop was petrol bombed and looted at 9.24. Six staff fled from the advancing mob through the back door.

Police quickly sealed off the centre, but found the trouble-



The scene of the riot was marked by burnt-out cars



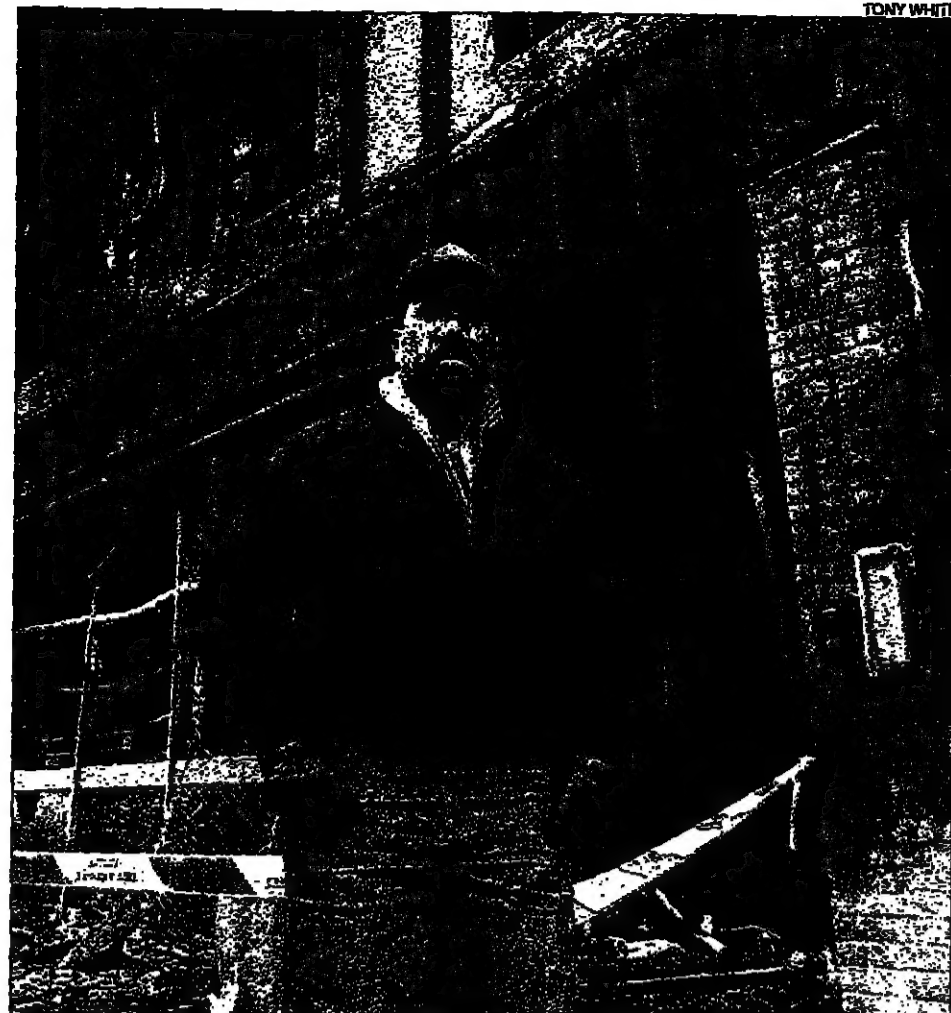
makers were outside the cordon, attacking shops and burning cars. PC John Tishaw, a police motorcyclist, was dragged from his bike at the junction of Brixton Road and Acre Lane and assaulted by a group of youths at 10 pm. Ten minutes later gunshots were heard by police outside the Ritzy.

The police cordon moved along the main streets - Acre

10.30 and midnight as the riot reached its peak. At 11 pm a grinning youth appeared from behind Morley's department store with two pillows in their cellophane wrapper. He walked casually past the line of 20 helmeted policemen. "Oy, drop it. Drop it now you cheeky bastard," one policeman shouted. Struggling, the youth dropped his loot and shouted: "OK, I'll just go and get another one," before running off.

The first glazing firm arrived at 12.45 am when police claimed to have the situation under control. The last skirmishes were over by 2 am. Frank Johnson, 60, arrived at his sportswear store in Fendale Road in the early hours to find it looted. Security grilles installed the week before at a cost of £1,800 had been ripped out and the door broken down, apparently by someone with a sledgehammer.

Empty boxes littered the pavement as the mob helped itself to trainers and sportswear worth tens of thousands of pounds. "These people were just nicking stuff for Christmas," said Mr Johnson, who founded the business in 1969 and was a victim of the 1981 disturbances. He said: "In 1981 police got here quickly and stopped them. Last night it took them 20 minutes and by then it was too late. The police were apologetic, they said they had more than they could handle." His daughter



Lee Jasper, leader of the National Black Caucus, stands in front of a burnt-out building. Mr Lee organised the police station vigil which degenerated into violence. He said: "With hindsight one would have liked to have avoided it"

Debbie, 28, said: "They went for the best stuff - Nike and Reebok trainers, worth £110 a pair and replica sports kits at £50 a time. You can see what they left, cheap trainers, socks and all the stuff they didn't want." Scotland Yard admitted yesterday that it had been taken by surprise by the extent of the rioting. A spokesman

said: "We were not expecting any serious trouble. We have had demonstrations outside police stations before and they have always gone smoothly."

A senior fire officer on duty on Wednesday was also at the centre of the 1981 riot. Assistant Chief Fire Officer Lou Gill said: "We were not prepared for the first Brixton riot and I

found it totally and utterly frightening. It is unnerving to have someone trying to hit you with a scaffold pole when you are trying to put out fires."

"In 1981 you could feel it coming but there has been a rejuvenation of Brixton and I have faith that this is just a minor hiccup. I have seen a lot worse."

Burglary suspect whose arrest led to violence on the streets

BY RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

Douglas died in police cell

WAYNE DOUGLAS, whose death in a police cell sparked hours of rioting in Brixton on Wednesday night, had been arrested on suspicion of aggravated burglary at a flat in south London, Mr Douglas, 25, was in possession of a knife when he was detained by police using the American-style long batons intended to give them greater protection.

Mr Douglas, who had previous convictions for burglary and robbery, was detained at about 2.30 am

on Tuesday last week by police officers investigating reports of a burglary in south London in which a man broke into homes and threatened householders with a knife. He allegedly stole bread and was chased to a nearby children's playground where he was arrested.

Police claimed that Mr Douglas threatened officers with knives several times after he fled from a flat in Brixton Way where he had terrorised the occupants.

Unidentified witnesses claimed in this week's *Caribbean Times* that Mr Douglas was beaten by

police. One said: "What I saw was horrific. They were jumping on him, kicking him, hitting him with their batons. Some of them were sitting on him."

Another alleged in *The Voice*: "Police were kicking and punching him. You could hear the sound of their batons on his bones. They told him to drop the knife and as soon as he did they jumped and dragged him into the park. He did not stand a chance." Other witnesses

agreed that police used excessive force in arresting Mr Douglas, who was taken to Brixton police station at about 3 am. He was found dead in a cell about 30 minutes later.

THE CATALYST

Officers attempted to resuscitate Mr Douglas, who had been living in a hotel for the homeless at Crystal Palace, south London, for the past six months. He was taken to King's College Hospital, south-east London, where he was pronounced dead.

A post-mortem examination was carried out at Greenwich by a

Home Office pathologist on the day of Mr Douglas's death. It was found that death was due to heart failure because of a defect in his heart.

The pathologist recorded a number of bruises on the dead man's body but said that those injuries could not have caused his death. An inquest was opened and adjourned at Southwark Coroner's Court last Monday. A date for the full inquest has not been set.

Mr Douglas's family complained that the post-mortem was carried out without their knowledge and have ordered a second

examination which is to be done next Tuesday.

The Police Complaints Authority is investigating the circumstances surrounding Mr Douglas's death. Mr Douglas was born in Dulwich, south London, to immigrant parents. His father George came to Britain from Spanish Town in Jamaica in the 1950s and died three years ago. His mother Pearl died from cancer. He had a sister Lisa, 23, and a brother Albert, 38.

In 1987 Mr Douglas was jailed for four years for robbery. He also served a two-year sentence for burglary in 1992.

Unemployment fuels anger in the black community

IN THE 14 years since riots first erupted in Brixton, more than £200 million has been pumped into the area, to combat urban dereliction and despair. Formal structures have been created to bring police and the community closer together and efforts made to combat high unemployment.

The initiatives were launched after Lord Scarman called for urgent action in the wake of the 1981 rioting.

In spite of visible improvements, some members of the black community say the money is being spent on high profile projects that do little to address unemployment among black people, which is as high as 28 per cent in some areas.

Lord Scarman said yesterday that he was "broken-hearted" about the latest violence. "It is a disappointment. This is a real tragedy." He said he would be making it his business to find out the cause. "This is a complete breakdown of everything that I tried to create. ... I am unable to judge the rights and wrongs at the moment."

He added: "I would appeal to my friends in Brixton that the important thing is to get back to the normal, lawful process of protest and politics and that nothing will be achieved by violence in the streets, be it against police or other people."

The Government has provided £154 million to the Labour-controlled Lambeth council since 1980 and a

further £83m is earmarked up to 2004 to improve council estates in the south London borough, one of the poorest in the country. About £60 million is for the Stockwell Park and Angell housing estates near the centre of Brixton.

However, the drive to improve life in the area is being provided by Brixton Challenge, an independent company that has £37.5 million of government money to spend between 1993 and 1998 to provide job training, set up businesses, refurbish buildings and improve estates. The challenge, a partnership involving local government and the private sector, has already attracted a further £69 million

from other public bodies, plus £82 million from the private sector.

As part of its work it has developed the Camberwell Foyer, which provides accommodation and training for 80 homeless young people for two years. The Baytree Centre, which offers training in information technology and secretarial skills to black women wanting to return to work, and has helped a businessman to open a sandwich bar offering jobs and training to people who have never worked.

The Ritzy has been refurbished into a multiscreen art house cinema with low cost accommodation to rent near



Lord Scarman, who said the riots were "a complete breakdown" of everything that he had tried to create

by Sue Brown, who deals with publicity for Brixton Challenge, said the fabric of Brixton had improved enormously and opportunities were being offered to locals.

"We are bringing new opportunities to Brixton. Brixton is becoming a leisure and entertainment centre. I do not think anyone is suggesting that one programme can deal with everything."

Unemployment across Lambeth is about 18 per cent, compared with 11.4 per cent for Greater London. In Townhall ward, in the centre of Brixton, it is 21.2 per cent and 27.2 per cent in Angell ward.

Some members of the black community lack faith in the police consultative committee set up to try to improve relations between police and the community. It is dominated by white people and, according to some black people, is not taken seriously by younger members of the community, increasingly angered at being stopped by the police when they are on the streets or in their cars.

However, Lloyd Leon, a former chairman of the committee, defended its role. "If black people do not want to be involved, that is their problem. It was set up for them. They only come when there is a problem. Many a time we have discussed drugs because that worries the community and the number of mentally ill people on the streets. We do have influence on the way policing takes place."

Yard chief attacks incitement to riot

Continued from page 1
there is a crisis in race relations in this country.

He called for the immediate suspension of the officers involved in arresting Mr Douglas, the withdrawal of long-handled batons and an investigation into the operation of Brixton police.

The police countered, however, with their own leaflet campaign yesterday when they issued pamphlets entitled *Local disorder - the facts*. It said that Mr Douglas died of a heart condition and that he suffered no physical injuries that could have contributed to his death. It added that after he collapsed, "police officers made strenuous efforts to revive

him" and that his death was the subject of an independent investigation.

Earlier at his press conference, Sir Paul said that he understood there were people genuinely concerned about deaths in custody. Mr Douglas was a wanted criminal when he was arrested by police, he brandished a knife and was disarmed. There was a struggle and he was taken to the police station where he fell ill.

Sir Paul emphasised that Douglas, a violent criminal, had died from a heart failure and to date there was no evidence to link his death to police action. He dismissed any comparison between the death and the attack on Rodney King in Los Angeles.

The Commissioner also said that he understood that up to three shots had been fired during the rioting on Wednesday - only the second time that firearms had been used during such disturbances on the mainland - and armed police were deployed for the first time in response. It is not known whether the shots were aimed at the police.

Eleven vehicles, including a coach, were overturned or set on fire and their shells still lined the streets and glaziers and window boards got to work in the aftermath yesterday. While up to 300 extra police were on standby in case of further violence last night, they hoped the severe cold would deter troublemakers.

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Jury accepts trombonist died making love and that girlfriend tried to spare his wife embarrassment

Mistress cleared of killing lover from village band

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A WOMAN was cleared yesterday of killing her lover, after a trial that brought to light a ten-year affair between two married members of a village band.

A jury took just 40 minutes to clear euphonium player Pollyanna Peate, 34, of the manslaughter of bass trombonist Brian Phillips, 62. She left court hugging her husband Graham, who wept as the verdict was given.

The prosecution had claimed that Mrs Peate caused her lover to have a heart attack, as they sat in his parked car near local marshes, by punching him when he said their affair had to end. She said he died making love, and that she dressed him and left him in his car to fulfil a pact that she would never cause his wife embarrassment.

Mr Peate had attended court throughout the four-day trial at Chester Crown Court, and struggled to hold back

tears as he told reporters: "We are very relieved it is all over and that Polly has been vindicated." Later, via her solicitors, Mrs Peate, a mother-of-two, said she wanted to resume a normal life.

Mr Phillips's widow Sybil, who had been his wife for nearly 40 years, did not attend the trial.

The jury of seven women and five men had been directed by Mr Justice Tucker not to judge the ethics of the situation. He referred to Mrs Peate's "disgraceful" conduct in having the affair, but said: "You are not here to judge the morality of what took place."

The court had been told how the lovers met after playing together in Frodsham Silver Band. They managed to keep their affair secret from their partners but not from their fellow musicians.

Mrs Peate, of Runcorn, Cheshire, had started the affair not long after the birth of her second child, and told the

court she loved her husband and had been happy with him, though he had been a gambler.

The couple are both "born-again" Christians and members of Booth Chapel Evangelical Church in Runcorn.

When police had questioned Mr Peate he said: "I would describe my marriage as perfect. My wife and I get on together and I trust her implicitly."

Mrs Peate, originally from the West Bromwich area, had worked for a while in a supermarket and a pub, before giving music lessons part-time.

Mr Phillips, a grandfather, was a blacksmith at a car plant. His wife met Mrs Peate when the band was performing, but was totally unaware of the relationship with her husband, whom she married when she was 19. She told police: "The affair has come as a great shock to me. I have

never suspected him through-out our marriage of having any affairs."

Statements from other band members told of the chemistry between the music-loving couple. One of them, Carolyn Hoppley, met her second husband Terence through the Frodsham band, both leaving their spouses to set up home with each other. She told police that she had heard Mr Phillips joke about "going down to the marshes".

Robert Fletcher, a bass player, told police: "It became common knowledge throughout the band that a relationship had formed. They were inseparable."

After an evening rehearsal on November 15 last year, the lovers made their usual drive to Frodsham Marshes, near the Mersey estuary, where they parked and made love. Mr Phillips told Mrs Peate that the relationship was to end. Mrs Peate told the jury of her efforts to revive Mr Phil-



In harmony: Pollyanna Peate with her husband Graham after the verdict. He had trusted his wife implicitly

lips in the tight confines of the car after he suffered a heart attack. She said: "We were making love. He collapsed. I said something like 'Brian, what's the matter?' 'I dropped his head while I was cradling him. He fell with a bang on the back of his head.

Eventually I realised I had to go home. I had to get my senses together."

She told the court she had made a pact with Mr Phillips before walking back into Frodsham and taking a taxi home. Her lover's body was found on the back seat of his

car by a policeman, and Mrs Peate was arrested after marks were allegedly discovered on his body.

She was alleged to have punched him four times. She said: "He died having sex. That's how it happened. I've got nothing to admit."

How stress and strain can lead to fatal illness



MEDICAL BRIEFING

GLOOMY old men reading the obituary columns of a newspaper in their clubs frequently draw the attention of their fellow members to colleagues who have failed to survive retirement, or others who have rapidly followed a long-time spouse to the graveyard.

Is it chance, or do people react to adverse happenings in their life by developing cancer, or other fatal diseases? In the latest *British Medical Journal* there was a report of an analysis of the occurrence of what it referred to as "severe life events" and their possible link to the onset of breast cancer in women. A Chinese doctor from Taiwan co-operated with the department of psychological medicine and the breast screening unit at King's College Hospital, London, in an exploration of the five years to the life of a woman before she developed a breast tumour.

Minor stresses and strains, or even a long battle to survive a difficult hard life, did not seem to affect the incidence of the cancer but personally threatening or major events that would cause an unpleasant and disturbing upheaval in the woman's life did. The doctors showed that even when allowance had been made for age and other confounding factors, there was still a marked association between severe stress and the development of breast cancer.

The King's College research was an important talking point at a reception given by the Prince of Wales at St James's Palace this week for the Bristol Cancer Help Centre. The Bristol group has long maintained that there is a close association between the patient's mental approach to the disease and its develop-

ment, progress after diagnosis, and final outcome. The King's College report gave the group further statistical backing for its belief.

The Bristol centre, which has been of special interest for the Princess of Wales since 1983, aims to provide an integrated approach in the treatment of cancer patients. It doesn't displace conventional medicine and their patients take the prescribed "Taxol" or "Taxol" as readily as the next person. At Bristol, however, they complement the standard therapeutic regime by providing close emotional support, dietary and lifestyle advice, relaxation and meditation. Patients are encouraged to focus on their rehabilitation and recovery and those who have little hope of recovery are encouraged to enjoy their last months or years.

The lesson that even the most experienced doctors can never predict, with absolute certainty, the outcome in cancer patients was exemplified by the presence of Jenny Jackson at St James's Palace. In 1987 she had two thirds of her liver removed for a primary liver tumour. The surgeons found that the apparently healthy remaining third had already been infiltrated and she was given six months to live.

But on Wednesday, eight years later, looking very healthy and with no evidence now of any cancer, Jenny was presented to the Prince of Wales. Why some people do well despite the odds is still unknown, but at Bristol they think that they have some of the answers.

DR THOMAS STUTTFORD

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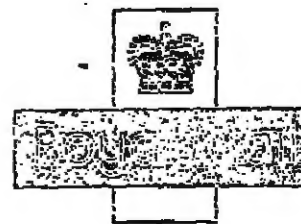
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Cruel-sports campaigner quits

Director claims he was hounded out by animal extremists

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

MONTHS of turmoil in the League Against Cruel Sports culminated yesterday in the departure of James Barrington, the executive director, who is accused of undermining the campaign to abolish hunting.

Lord Soper, president of the league and a lifelong opponent of fox-hunting, is also to resign, partly for reasons of health and partly because he wishes to distance himself from the feud.

Mr Barrington, 43, who had held the post since 1988, said his position had been made untenable. He added: "I am taking legal advice as to whether I have grounds for suing the league for constructive dismissal."

Lord Soper said: "I will be 93 in January. I presided over the meeting on December 3 which failed to resolve the dispute and now I think it right to stay out of this quarrel and leave it to others to settle. I remain totally opposed to hunting."

Mr Barrington had been under severe pressure since he gave an interview to *The Field* two months ago in which he appeared to soften the league's anti-hunting line. He suggested the sport could be made more acceptable if hunters abandoned the practice of using terriers to dig out foxes which go to ground.

Were that to happen, he told the magazine, "the league would feel less antagonistic towards hunting. It would have a new lease of life and a longer future than at present." The remarks appalled activists, who accused him of aiding and abetting the enemy.

Mr Barrington had also provoked anger by dismissing two senior members of staff — Kevin Saunders, the press officer, and Michelle Bryan, an administrative assistant. Mr Saunders was reinstated at a meeting of the league on Wednesday night.

At the meeting on Decem-

ber 3, Mr Barrington lost a vote of no-confidence and was placed under a gagging order that prevented him discussing his views on hunting with the press.

"My position was made quite impossible," he said yesterday. "The people who have taken over have other agendas. They are like a pack with the scent of blood in their nostrils and will not be satisfied with getting rid of me."

"I think there are some who will want to go not just for hunting and shooting but for angling as well and they will wreck this organisation. I fear for the future of the league. It

animals for sport, but we have never had a policy on angling. Some of our members are anglers and the issue has never been raised in the league's 71-year history."

"We would welcome it if the hunting fraternity decided to make their sport less cruel, but it is not for us to suggest compromises. Our position must remain one of total opposition to any form of hunting. This is particularly so when we have the prospect of a Labour Government pledged to ban the sport."

The chairman of the league's executive committee, Howard Hodges, a supporter of Mr Barrington who was elected last month after the previous incumbent resigned, is considering his position.

"It's a real mess," he said. "The committee is a mix of malice, muddled thinking and petty jealousies and my position has been made very difficult."

The league is no stranger to internecine warfare. Mr Barrington's predecessor, Richard Course, was also forced to leave after falling out with his rank-and-file members. He subsequently came out in favour of hunting as the least cruel way of controlling foxes.

Ironically, Mr Course now believes that it would be more logical for the league to focus on shooting and angling. "At least in the case of fox-hunting you have the excuse you are taking part in a form of pest control," he said. "Anglers could be said to be tormenting a fellow creature for sport."

Janet George, of the British Field Sports Society, said the hunting community would be sorry to see Mr Barrington go. "He was a reasonable man, and it is always sad to see a reasonable man driven out by extremist elements."

The league, founded in 1924, has an annual income of around £15 million. It has about 17,000 voting members and a similar number of non-voting donors and supporters.

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A disapproving Andrew Eade with the "Island of Hope". He wants Virginia Bottomley to take the money back

Accident? No, it's art, in a roundabout way

A FILE of scrap metal and bollards on a roundabout is no accident. It is a £30,000 work of art financed by Lottery funds and intended to symbolise the stages of mankind.

Yesterday Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, was facing calls for the money to be taken back

from Wrekin District Council, Shropshire, as similar artworks were being planned for two more traffic islands.

Andrew Eade, Tory group leader on the Labour-run council, has written to Mrs Bottomley about the sculpture created from the public arts fund in Telford. He said: "It looks like a load of

crashed cars — hardly the most soothing picture for the passing motorist."

The *Island of Hope* cost £6,000, paid to artist Mark Evans, and £24,000 for traffic re-routing. The council's leader, Phil Homer, said: "I like most of it. Telford has a long tradition of having something on its roundabouts."

Government acts to shore up beef sales

By MICHAEL HORNSBY

THE Government acted yesterday to try to dispel fears over "mad cow" disease as sales of beef plummeted. Some wholesalers reported falls in sales of 25 per cent, but the Meat and Livestock Commission put the overall decline at 14 per cent. Two hundred schools in Dorset are the latest to take beef off the menu.

Douglas Hogg, the Minister of Agriculture, has appointed four new members to the scientific committee that advises him on bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). All the Government could do, he said, was to act on the best possible advice.

The number of new cases of BSE so far this year were 42.6 per cent down on 1994 and 58.4 per cent down on 1993, Mr Hogg announced. He also

said that the use of cattle backbone in mechanically recovered meat — used in meat pies, soups and stock cubes — would be prohibited from today. This was to "remove any risk of spinal cord tissue (thought capable of carrying BSE) entering the human food chain".

One of the new appointees to the advisory committee is John Collinge, a clinical neurologist at St Mary's Hospital Medical School, west London, who is using mice implanted with human genes to test human susceptibility to BSE.

Although livestock prices have fallen by up to 15 per cent, most supermarkets say it is too soon to pass to reductions on to customers. Tesco said if it cut prices too heavily it would give the impression there was something wrong with beef.

Venison answers call of the wild

VENISON is gaining popularity as a tasty low-cholesterol alternative to beef. Prices are stable although deer farms report a sharp increase in sales as a result of the BSE scare (Robin Young writes).

Safeway, which introduced Scottish wild venison in 1993, sells eight products. Sainsbury's offers venison from red deer raised on parkland.

Venison, being drier than beef, benefits from marinating or basting.

Promotions include: Asda: pork whole leg £2.18 a kg, apricots 99p a lb, clementines 99p a lb. Co-op: Norfolk duckling with giblets £4.39 for 1.9kg, whole turkey £2.49 a kg. Harrods: cooked lobsters £23.70 a kg, stuffed turkey galantine £2.95 for 100g. Marks & Spencer: gammon honey joint £3.99 for 510g,

cheese and tomato pizza £1.89 for 370g. Morrisons: roaster chickens £3.99 each, whole trout £2.84 a kg, frozen extra fine whole beans 49p for 454g. Safeway: Chicken breast fillets £6.99 for 1.19kg, comic pears 45p a lb, six deep-filled mince pies 58p.

Sainsbury's: fresh lamb leg £4.49 a kg, boneless unsmoked gammon £3.69 a kg. Somerfield: boneless leg of pork £2.84 a kg, fresh Scottish whole salmon £4.78 a kg. Tesco: lamb chops £6.19 a kg, boneless leg of pork £2.99 a kg, large pineapples 99p. Waitrose: salmon steaks £2.99 lb, Aberdeen Angus roasting beef £2.99 a lb.

Venables evidence unreliable says judge

By A STAFF REPORTER

TERRY VENABLES, the England soccer coach, was criticised by a judge yesterday for giving evidence that was at variance with details in his autobiography. In a judgment in which his London club, Scribes West, was ordered to settle a bill from an advertising executive, some of his evidence on oath was condemned as "rather wobbly".

Mr Recorder Williams said that some of what Mr Venables had told him "had not been entirely reliable, to put it at its most charitable". The judge said that Jeffrey Fugler, who brought the action, had proved he was entitled to the money he claimed. He said, however, that he had failed in some of his arguments and as a result, the figure of nearly £20,000 for which he had been asking would be reduced to £11,292.95 plus interest. Because of his evasiveness in giving answers, he was also going to treat a lot of what he said with "more than a pinch of salt, more likely a handful".

Mr Fugler was also told he would get only half of his estimated legal costs of £90,000. No figure was available for the costs Mr Venables's club would have to meet, but a QC and a junior barrister were retained to defend the action and the bill is likely to be in excess of £100,000.

Mr Fugler had told Central London County Court the money he was owed represented the outstanding two thirds of a £30,000 bill for distributing 20,000 brochures to advertise the England coach's then ailing club. Scribes West unsuccessfully counter-claimed a similar amount, arguing that the promotional campaign, was a "top flop" — a description put forward by Mr Venables.

Mr Venables, the former chief executive at Spurs, claimed he had been the victim of a conspiracy to sabotage his chances of leading the England team to victory in next year's European championship.

The judge said, however, that Mr Venables's evidence on oath contradicted what had been written in his autobiography.

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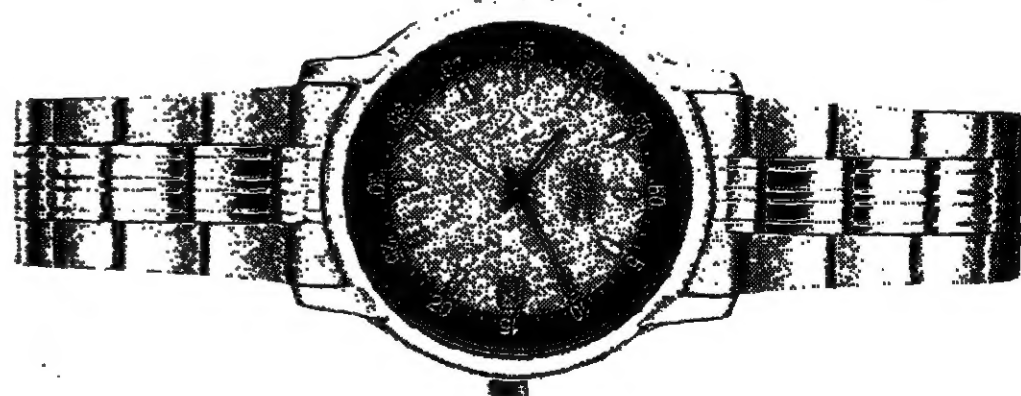
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Judge tells parents who wanted man jailed that court must 'register justice to everyone'

Manslaughter verdict sends girl's killer to mental hospital

By KATE ALDERSON

THE man who burst into a classroom and stabbed Nikki Conroy, 12, to death was yesterday sent to a hospital for the criminally insane. The jury at Leeds Crown Court was directed to return a verdict of manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility.

As sentence was passed on Stephen Wilkinson, 31, Diane Conroy, Nikki's mother, burst into tears. Mrs Justice Smith told the couple, who have attended every day of the hearing, that they may find the verdict hard to accept.

"You must feel Nikki has suffered a terrible injustice, and she did, but I hope you can also bring yourself to understand that the duty of this court is to register justice to everyone," she said.

"There is not a person in this court who does not sympathise with your point of view, but I do hope you will accept this decision has not been taken lightly, but with great care by the doctors, by counsel and by me."

The judge directed the jury to return a formal verdict of guilty to manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility after four forensic psychiatrists agreed that Wil-

kinson, unemployed for Middlesbrough, was severely mentally ill on the day of the attack. They described his condition, which began in his early teens, as paranoid psychosis or paranoid schizophrenia.

After hearing the verdict, Peter and Diane Conroy said: "We wanted him found guilty of murder. As far as we are concerned, the day he went into that school with a holdall filled with knives and an axe he knew what he was doing. We feel he was sane at the time although he may be insane now."

Mr Conroy said he was amazed at the judge's decision. "It was a bit of a shock. We had been consulted by the prosecution who asked us the day before the trial ended if we would be happy to accept a plea of manslaughter. We thought about it and decided not. We wanted a murder verdict, both for us and for Nikki's memory. Manslaughter seems to detract from the crime that was committed."

Wilkinson had denied murdering Nikki but admitted manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility and also pleaded guilty to the attempted murders of two



Wilkinson: severely mentally ill for years

other schoolgirls. Michelle Reeve, then 13, had 15 knife wounds inflicted on her in the attack at Hall Garth School, Acklam, Cleveland, in March last year, while Emma Winter, then 12, suffered lesser wounds.

The judge ordered that Wilkinson, who burst into a classroom wearing a black balaclava and carrying a replica gun and a holdall containing three knives and an axe, be detained in Ashworth Hospital, Liverpool, for a period without limit for all three offences.

Mrs Justice Smith told the court that she would recommend that Christopher Bielby and David Eland — the teachers who burst into the classroom after seeing "blood on white shirts" and disarmed Wilkinson who was waving what they believed to be a gun — be officially commended for their actions.

"It is safe to say that everybody there that day must have suffered a great deal of trauma but I felt Mr Bielby and Mr Eland, by their actions, did in fact prevent the tragedy from being even greater," she said. "There is little doubt that if they had not done what they did we would have been today trying more than one murder case."

Mr and Mrs Conroy said they had not allowed their daughter to work as a papergirl because they thought it too dangerous but they believed she was safe in a classroom.

In the Conroy family home in Middlesbrough, pictures of Nikki fill the lounge and her portrait is the centrepiece of the room.

"She loved life and was full of fun," Mr Conroy, 44, said. "But we take comfort knowing she at least had 12 perfectly happy years which many children don't get these days. She could not have been

happier than she was and we try to be brave for her."

Nikki's death prompted a thousand letters of sympathy sent to the Conroys by people they have never met. Among them are letters from Colin Parry, whose son Tim was killed in the IRA bombing at Warrington, and words of comfort from relatives of children in the M40 minibus crash. "Without the help of a lot of people we would not have got through this dreadful time," Mrs Conroy said. "We were especially touched by the letters from Tim Parry's family and relatives of the M40 crash victims. They are helpful because those parents know what we are going through. Other people say they understand but they cannot know in the same way."

"It is very difficult for us and there's not a day goes by we don't think about Nikki," Mrs Conroy said. "She will always be 12 to us and life is very, very hard without her."

"The day she was killed is still very vivid in our memories, but we always talk about Nikki and will always remember her as a very happy child. On Christmas Day we'll take flowers to the cemetery but everything we do now is just not the same without her. It will be like this forever."



Nikki Conroy pictured at the age of 11 with her brother John and her mother Diane. "Everything we do now is just not the same. It will be like this forever"

School pal who turned into a fantasising loner

By KATE ALDERSON

NIKKI CONROY'S killer was a friendless loner who spent his adult life hiding away from the outside world, fantasising about killing and "jacking" and writing about his tormented double life with his alter ego, Wilson Jinks.

Stephen Wilkinson had a passion for violent comics, heavy metal music and computers and became an avid collector of books about serial killers, sex crimes, the occult and after-death experiences. After leaving school at 16 he developed a hatred of the world, which he believed was persecuting him.

Andrew Smeit, 30, Wilkinson's best friend at school, was one of the few people who had any insight into his life. Of their childhood years he said: "We spent quite a lot of social time together at each other's houses. We were just ordinary friends, he was just a normal mate."

But Wilkinson, a prolific reader with an IQ of 149 and a member of Mensa, began reading books about real-life crimes and murders. "He became the lonely misfit, the reclusive who spent his time reading, writing, drawing and listening to heavy metal music," Mr Smeit said.

Wilkinson had an undistinguished career at school and few other friends. By the age of 14 he was developing a reputation as a loner. According to friends and psychia-

trists, who interviewed him about the stabbings, this was a critical age for Wilkinson and it was then he began seriously to retreat into himself and reject the world.

After leaving school with no qualifications, Wilkinson went to a local college and passed a number of GCSEs. He tried working as a painter on a youth training programme but believed everyone wanted to get rid of him and no-one liked him.

Subsequently he never found a job, although he applied three times for the post of mortuary attendant. For a number of years he lived on state benefit in his own flat, but returned home in 1989 to Easterside, Middlesbrough, to live with his father, Jim, who was separated from his mother.

Elizabeth Marsh, Wilkinson's aunt, lived in the same street as her nephew and described him as a man with few interests in life. "Stephen has never worked a day in his life and is a real loner," she said. "He has never had a girlfriend that I know of, and hasn't gone one mate of his own."

In 1985 he tried to commit suicide but was rescued by a tenant in his house who found him trying to slash his wrists. Wilkinson saw a doctor and was referred for two sessions of counselling, one lasting ten minutes and another 15.

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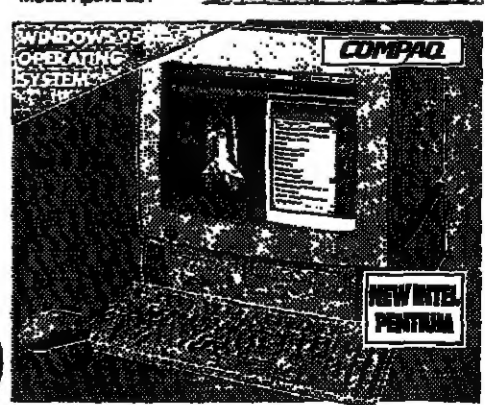
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Modern GPs lack drive of Dr Finlay

By JEREMY LAURANCE
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

THE dedication of Dr Finlay, the fictitious GP who put his patients' needs above his own, has given way to the nine-to-five doctor who demands more from life than the next medical case, a survey has found.

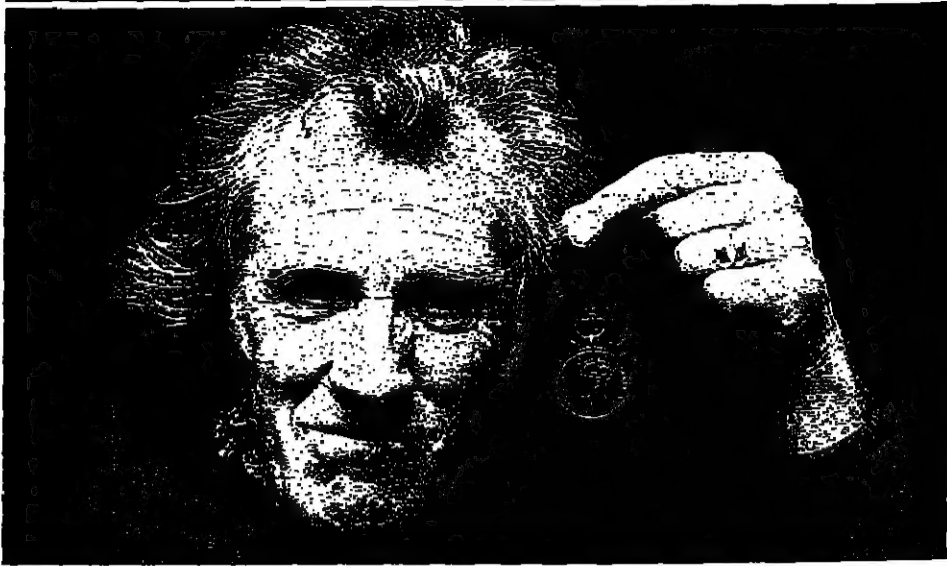
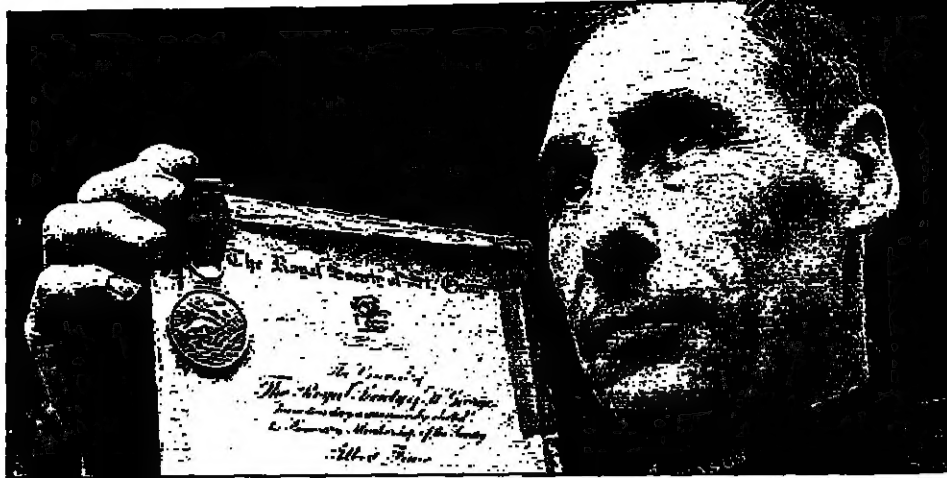
Younger doctors are less likely than their elders to be immersed in the profession. Among doctors over 55, one in six viewed medicine as a vocation compared with one in 100 among those under 30, according to a survey by the British Medical Association of 800 of its members. More than one in two of those under 30 said medicine must be organised to balance the demands of career and family, compared with one in six of the over-55s.

Dr Mac Armstrong, secretary of the BMA, said: "We now realise doctors can only give their best to patients if they are whole people. Spending the whole of your life dealing with death and disease can be an extremely destructive process. To give your best to patients you need time."

Dr Sandy Macara, chairman of the association, said: "I reckon Dr Finlay was jolly good in his day but we need a different kind of doctor today. We don't want doctors who are obsessed by work to the exclusion of being full and rounded people. The survey shows that medicine is still seen as a commitment but this is balanced by the need for a full life."

A second survey of 600 new medical graduates found that a quarter planned to leave medicine or practise abroad, most commonly in Australia and New Zealand.

Dr Vivienne Nathanson, under-secretary of the BMA, said: "It is extremely worrying. It costs from £250,000 to £300,000 to train a doctor and potentially a quarter are being lost to British practice. We need to find out if their absence is temporary or permanent, whether they return to full or part-time practice and whether there is a consistent reason for them going. If there is a consistent reason then we will have an opportunity to address it."



The Queen talking to Albert Fearn after he received his award for rescuing Mike Logan. George Fearn, top right, watched his father's medal sold to Mr Logan, above right, 55 years later

Air raid survivor buys rescuer's George Medal

By ROBIN YOUNG

A SURVIVOR of a German air raid on Coventry during the last war has spent his life savings on the medal awarded to the man who saved his life. As a six-year-old boy Mike Logan was dragged from the wreckage of his home in Coventry by Albert Fearn, an Air Raid Protection warden. Mr Logan's father, mother and younger brother were all killed when their house was hit by a German bomb in October 1940.

Mr Fearn was awarded the George Medal, the highest honour for civilian bravery, for the heroism he displayed in rescuing Mike and his brother Patrick. He was presented with the medal by King George VI. Mr Fearn died six years ago, aged 79, and the medal passed to his son, George, who sold it this week to raise money to save his home.

George Fearn was at the sale at Warwick Auctions in Coventry and, after pro-



Coventry in ruins after bombing raids in October and November 1940. The Logan house suffered a direct hit

longed bidding, saw the medal sell for £2,850. The buyer introduced himself and disclosed that he was Mike Logan, now 61. Mr Fearn told him: "My father helped you, and now you have done the same for him." Mr Fearn said he had never wanted to part

with the medal because it was such a potent symbol of his father's bravery. "I wanted to pass the medal on to my eldest son, Craig, but it was not to be. I had to sell it or risk losing my house. I was just hoping it would not be sold abroad and lost forever,"

he said. "It is terrific that if the medal has to be sold, it should be to him. He has as close a bond to that medal as anyone and I am sure we will remain in touch."

A total of 449 German bombers took part in the bombing of Coventry and

dropped 503 tons of high explosives and 881 incendiary bombs. The Germans even coined the verb *Coventrieren*, meaning to destroy utterly by bombing. The Logan family home in Henry Street suffered a direct hit and Mr Logan's father Michael, 42,

his pregnant mother, Florence, and brother, Frankie, five, were killed. The only survivors were Mike and his older brother Patrick, now 62.

Mr Logan does not intend to keep the medal. He has promised it to Coventry's Herbert Art Gallery and Museum. He said yesterday: "That man saved my life and this medal should never leave Coventry. It was won here. Albert was very fond of the city and this is where it is going to stay. I heard that the medal was up for sale and I just had to try to buy it."

Mr Logan, a former Rolls-Royce fitter who is now unemployed, added: "Albert risked his life. He was told not to go into the house but he went in to get the survivors and the dead. I was very sad to have to buy it from the family, but I felt I had to buy the medal to keep it in Coventry. I will be giving it to the museum so everyone in Coventry can see it. This is a wonderful day. I am absolutely thrilled."

Author accepts damages

An author accepted substantial undisclosed libel damages yesterday over a review in the *Independent* newspaper that compared his views to those of the British National Party.

David Selbourne, 58, who published *The Principle of Duty* last year, claimed in the High Court that the comparison was offensive and damaging and lacked justification.

Just before the case, Newspaper Publishing plc paid a substantial sum into court which Mr Selbourne agreed to accept. The court was told he began proceedings after the newspaper refused to apologise or publish a correction.

Boy not Ben

A boy found in a gypsy camp in northern Greece was not Ben Needham, 6, from Sheffield, who disappeared while on holiday in 1991. The child, who lacked Ben's blue eyes and red birthmark, had a Greek birth certificate.

Key prison issue

Hundreds of locks at Frankland prison, Co Durham, are being changed after the disappearance of a master key that can open every cell door. The relocking of 400 cells and other doors and entrances will cost at least £100,000.

Drugs expulsion

A boy aged 15 has been expelled from Hounsdown comprehensive at Totton, near Southampton, after he allegedly supplied Ecstasy tablets to other pupils. About 30 other pupils have been warned by police about possessing drugs.

Operations hit

Three bowel operations at a hospital in London were cancelled after thieves broke into a car at Bray, Berkshire, and stole two cameras used in keyhole surgery. The cameras, worth £32,000, are the only ones of their type in Britain.

Through the wall

Workmen carrying out cavity wall insulation at a pensioner's home on St Mary's on the Isles of Scilly drilled too deep — and pumped the built-in wardrobe in her bedroom full of foam. It took Liz Tyler, 66, three days to clean the clothes.

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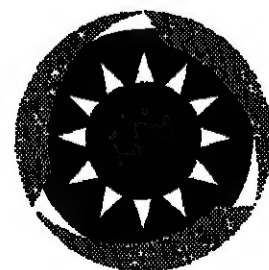
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New chief's arrival completes revamp of Tory media team

Political editor hired to rival Labour spin doctor

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

CHARLES LEWINGTON, the political editor of the *Sunday Express*, was appointed to one of the hottest seats in national politics yesterday when he became director of communications for the Conservative Party.

After just five years on national newspapers, Mr Lewington, 36, is the Tories' chief spin doctor, charged with combating Labour's formidable media operation. He was at his new desk in Central Office immediately his appointment was announced. His salary has not been disclosed, but it is thought to be at least £70,000.

He replaces Hugh Colver, who walked out last month after only six months, complaining that he did not want to be a "political propagandist" and bemoaning the defeatism of many ministers.

The appointment completes the reorganisation of the Tories' media operation, carried out by Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman, in which Sheila Gunn, from *The Times*, and Paul Hooper, from *The*

Sun, have been drafted in to strengthen the team.

Mr Lewington will be pitted directly against Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair's press secretary, who with Peter Mandelson is widely credited with having reinforced his party's long-standing lead in the opinion polls. Mr Lewington and Mr Campbell have one thing in common: they are both former lobby correspondents with an instinctive feel for what makes a story and where best to place it. But while Mr Campbell can be an abrasive figure, not afraid to bully the broadcast media into giving his people airtime, Mr Lewington is likely to adopt a more subtle approach, preferring a quiet word in one of Westminster's many shadowy corners. He will be determined to avoid any repetition of the clangers that have disfigured the Tories' media efforts in recent weeks.

Nicknamed "Lord Charles" for his relaxed, unflappable manner and his taste for the good life, Mr Lewington has no shortage of media and political contacts. Nor does he lack courage. Few observers, including many ministers and Tory MPs, give much for the Government's chances at the next election and his friends say he recognises the risk in joining Central Office with such a mountain to climb. A bad defeat at the election would tarnish his reputation.

Unlike Mr Campbell, who is virtually unchallenged as Labour's main spokesman, Mr Lewington will also have to negotiate his way past the many rival power centres in Downing Street, Whitehall departments, the Whips' Office and the backbench 1922 Committee.

Labour's media machine went quickly into operation yesterday, likening his move from the ailing *Sunday Express* to Central Office as that of a man leaving one sinking ship to join another. One wag dubbed him "spin waiter" rather than spin doctor for his dark good looks and his eagerness to please.

Mr Lewington may be shrewd and streetwise, but some of his colleagues doubt that his commitment to the Tory cause can match the passion and flair that Mr Campbell brings to his job. Although he is said to be promising charm rather than aggression, he may have to revise his ideas as the fighting intensifies in the run-up to the election.

Mr Lewington was educated at Sherborne and Bath University, where he gained an economics degree. After a spell on regional newspapers, he joined the *Daily Express* in 1990 as a junior lobby correspondent and a year later became political editor of the *Sunday Express* after being head-hunted by Eve Pollard, then the Editor.

It is said that she routinely addressed him as "Darling Charles" and that he was adored by secretaries wherever he worked. One colleague said: "He only had to enter the room, and some of them came close to swooning."

He married Pippa Kelly, a *Hansard* reporter, a year ago.



Charles Lewington, whose job will pit him against Labour's Alastair Campbell

Heseltine dismisses rail claim 'rubbish'

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

MICHAEL HESELTINE dismissed claims by Labour yesterday that rail privatisation would cost taxpayers an extra £850 million a year as "unadulterated rubbish".

Mr Heseltine, standing in for John Major at Prime Minister's Questions, was challenged by Ann Taylor, Shadow Leader of the House, to confirm that the public subsidy would rise after privatisation. "Isn't the message clear that rail privatisation is a waste of taxpayers' money?" she said. But Mr Heseltine said they came from a Labour press release and "like most Labour press releases, they are unadulterated rubbish".

The clash came as the Government claimed that rail privatisation was "gaining irresistible momentum". In a written response to a critical Trade and Industry Committee report, Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, said the move would help taxpayers and improve services. He did not comment on the committee's claim that privatisation would cost the taxpayer an extra £700 million.

Law sought to restrain water companies

By NICK NUTTALL

ENVIRONMENTAL groups are backing a proposed change in the law that will give rivers, meadows and fens greater protection from water companies and farmers.

Richard Burden, Labour MP for Birmingham Northfield, has agreed to sponsor a Private Member's Bill aimed at improving water conservation. The government is understood to be sympathetic and the National Rivers Authority has voiced its support.

The Bill will aim to limit abstractions from rivers and set mandatory targets for the prevention and repair of leaks by water companies. It will also promote the use of water-efficient devices such as low-flush toilets.

The move comes as Yorkshire Water announced plans to take more water from rivers to preserve supplies during the present dry spell and to avoid shortages next summer. The company's plan was condemned by English Nature, which fears damage to rare plants and animals in the lower Derwent valley national nature reserve.

Muslim demands Labour inquiry into selection vote

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A MILLIONAIRE seeking to become Britain's first Muslim MP accused the Labour Party of running an unfair election yesterday after he lost a selection battle for Glasgow Govan.

Mohammed Sarwar, a Glasgow businessman, plans to appeal to Labour's national executive over the ballot, which he lost by one vote. He said that 52 votes were invalid and he believes some may have been unfairly ruled out.

The election campaign between Mr Sarwar and Mike Watson, the sitting Labour MP for Glasgow Central, which is to disappear under the boundary changes, was one of the most acrimonious in Scotland for many years. There have been allegations of vote-rigging, secret deals and financial irregularities from both sides. Mr Sarwar, 43, has been criticised for sending his children to private schools.

There have also been accusations of racism. Mohammed Shoaib, vice-chairman of the constituency party, said: "The message the Labour Party is giving out is if you

have a Muslim or Pakistani background, you are not on."

Mr Watson was declared the winner by 237 to 236 votes. A third candidate, Margaret Curran, polled 18. Members of the constituency party were asked to list first and second choices and when Ms Curran's votes were redistributed among the other two candidates they each had 245. Mr Watson won because he had polled the highest number of first-choice votes.

Mr Sarwar said: "The votes were ruled out on the basis that the signatures did not match up. For many in the Asian community English is a second language. I want the National Executive Committee to look at all the votes."

He said that he was not alleging racism and did not want a new election. Instead he wanted the 52 invalid votes to be included and the count to be done again. Mr Watson, however, said he believed that the election had been fair.

Mr Sarwar, who came to Scotland from his native Pakistan at the age of 26, said that he did not know whether he would seek another seat.

Tory MP becomes 50th to pull out

By JAMES LANDALE

ROBERT HICKS yesterday became the 50th Tory MP to announce that he will retire at the general election.

Mr Hicks, 57, said that he was standing down from his Cornwall South-East seat because MPs had become more arrogant since he entered Parliament in 1970. He has a majority of 7,704.

"Both Parliament and the Conservative Party have altered as you would expect over my time at Westminster," he said. "Unfortunately, in my judgment neither has necessarily changed for the better."

"There is a new type of Member of Parliament on the Conservative side. They are products of Thatcherism — more aggressive — and there is also an arrogance which does not appeal to me. On the Labour side they have got increasingly frustrated and irritable. The atmosphere is not quite as relaxed or as constructive as it used to be."

Mr Hicks was an assistant whip in the Heath government between 1973 and 1974 but has spent most of his career on the back benches.

IN PARLIAMENT

YESTERDAY in the Commons: questions to agriculture minister and Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, standing in for John Major. Estimates debates on the provision of health services for women with breast cancer; research and the screening programme; and on financial services regulation. In the Lords: debates on Child Support (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations; Child Support (Compensation for Recipients of Family Credit and Disability Working Allowance) Regulations; Bristol Development Corporation (Area and Constitution) Order and Non-Domestic Rating (Chargeable Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations. TODAY: neither House is sitting.

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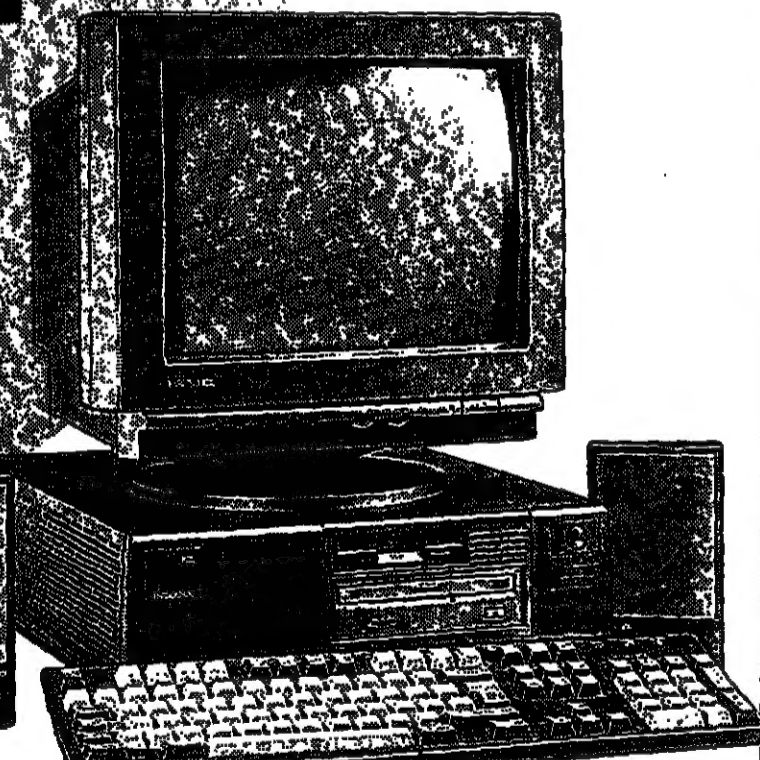


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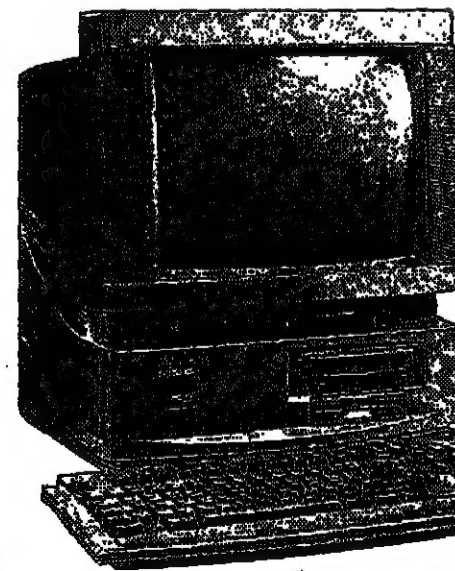
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Major's appeals for delaying launch of single currency will fall on stony ground

EU to start countdown for monetary union

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN MADRID

EUROPEAN leaders will give short shrift to John Major's pleas for a delay in monetary union when they meet in Madrid today to start the countdown to its launch and combat the doubts which have descended on the project in recent weeks.

The Prime Minister can count on little more than a polite hearing when he makes his case for studying the likely economic disruption if monetary union is launched among a small group of countries on schedule on January 1, 1999. Despite British claims to have Rome's support, Mr Major will receive no overt backing from Lamberto Dini, the Italian Prime Minister, for his argument that delay would be prudent.

"We agree with Major's idea for a study on the impact," a senior Italian official said. "But we don't want to touch the subject of delay."

While much of Europe has shifted recently towards the British Government's jaundiced view of the EU's performance, Britain's isolation over economic and monetary union (EMU) reflects its continuing position as the most reluctant of member states. However, while irritation is running high over Britain's resistance

to almost all substantial reform at next year's Maastricht revamp and its obstruction of an anti-racist package, some leaders are concerned about the dangers of freezing out London.

Erik Derycke, the Foreign Minister of ultra-federalist Belgium, yesterday deplored the call by President Chirac and Helmut Kohl, the Ger-

man Chancellor, for a two-speed Europe which would leave Britain behind. "We must keep talking to the British when we talk about monetary union, even at Madrid," he said.

Mr Major's desire to force debate on EMU is just one element making for a sour session at the exhibition site near Madrid airport where the leaders are meeting amid some of the strictest security

measures seen in Europe. Vigilance has been heightened after the death of six people in a car bomb, attributed to Basque separatists, in the Madrid outskirts this week.

As well as gloom over monetary union, the Madrid mood has been soured by M Chirac's troubles at home, the bad blood over his nuclear testing and differences among the 15 over next year's planned revamp of the EU and the future membership of the former East bloc states.

The refusal to tamper with EMU timing, widespread even among countries with only the remotest chance of qualifying for the single currency, reflects the consensus among European leaders that any hint of missing the rendezvous decreed at Maastricht would shake the very pillars of European "construction".

German anxiety, the French strikes, and the weak economic performance of a majority of member states have shaken all but the most ardent federalists. However, the consensus among the Euro-elite holds that the show must go on. Failure would bring "an enormous loss of credibility and a formidable retreat from the European idea", Jacques Santer, the Commission Presi-

dent, said. The markets would punish Europe, robbing the poorer economies and leaving the rich ones "like King Midas with their hands full of gold and their industry moved to their neighbours' land".

Privately, European politicians say they are not naive about the possibility of missing the deadline, but in the words of a senior German official in Brussels: "It is far too early to talk about delay. If we have to do it, we can wait until 1998."

The EU leaders will agree tomorrow to set a date in April 1998 for choosing the founder EMU members made up of states which meet the "convergence" criteria on economic performance. The leaders are also due to agree to call the currency the Euro, a German choice which has attracted no enthusiasm.

While no formal decision is expected, the question of enlargement will further dampen the proceedings. A handful of countries, including Britain, want to encourage the EU to contemplate the disruptive and costly business of adapting to the entry of the poorer Eastern states and Cyprus and Malta.

Letters, page 17



A logo proclaiming the Spanish presidency of the European Union is set up in Madrid yesterday

Rifkind adopts hard line over single currency

BY GEORGE BROCK, EUROPEAN EDITOR

A STRONG warning that Britain is not likely to accept the "sacrifice" of control over the British economy involved in joining a single currency was issued by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, on the eve of the European Union summit in Madrid.

Explaining the Government's stance in the most sceptical tone he has yet used about the single currency, Mr Rifkind hardened his tone in an attempt to put what Conservatives call "clear blue water" between the Government and Labour. He contradicted Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, over the political consequences of a single currency and hinted that, although the Government will not decide yet, the odds are stacked against Britain joining a monetary union. In a speech earlier this year, Mr Clarke argued that membership of a monetary union did not threaten the nation state.

In an interview with *The Times*, Mr Rifkind insisted that the Government's mind was not made up on a single currency, but the criteria he outlined for settling the issue suggest he would not recommend British membership if a referendum on monetary union were held under a Conservative government. The Cabinet recently discussed a referendum and only Mr Clarke, Michael Heseltine and Michael Portillo opposed such a commitment in the party's manifesto.

Mr Rifkind defended a speech he made in London this autumn which angered some Tory Europhiles and Foreign Office diplomats by insisting that Britain should not surrender its national

interests in pursuit of influence in Europe. Asked whether this applied to the dominant European issue of the single currency, Mr Rifkind said: "Everyone accepts that monetary union means that national parliaments and national governments would no longer be able to have control over, or even have a dominant influence on, a whole range of monetary decisions and economic decisions as a consequence. Well, that's a sacrifice of national control."

"It's then common sense to say that you should only do that if you are satisfied that there are benefits to your country of a kind and of a degree which make that sacrifice justified."

"How do you measure influence? You measure it by whether it adds to or detracts [from] our national security, whether it adds to or detracts [from] our national prosperity, whether it adds to or detracts [from] our national quality of life."

The Foreign Secretary arrived in Madrid last night. His remarks are bound to annoy Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, and President Chirac of France, who are keen to use today's meeting to show that plans for a single currency are not in doubt. France and Germany may struggle to put a united EU on display. John Major plans to warn his partners that they are "sleepwalking" towards a single currency without having considered the implications. Mr Rifkind said he expected Britain's partners to agree to a suggestion from Britain and Italy that EU leaders should commission a deeper study into the consequences of a single currency.

Strikers hint at peace as Metro opens briefly

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

HOPES that the French transport strike may be coming to an end rose yesterday when parts of the Paris Metro system briefly reopened and a key union leader called for negotiations including a possible return to work.

French stocks climbed dramatically and the franc gained more than two centimes against the German mark, as markets reacted to indications that after three gruelling weeks, a halt to the strike may be in sight.

The reopening of the Metro was short-lived and largely symbolic. A single line ran for less than two hours, with eight trains instead of the usual 63, before the network once more halted.

Union leaders repeated calls for further demonstrations tomorrow, but one strike leader raised for the first time the possibility of discussing a return to work with Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister.

Marc Blondel, head of the Force Ouvrière union, called for a "social summit" set for December 21 to be brought forward and its scope expanded to include negotiations over disputed welfare reforms and a cut in working hours as well as terms for returning to work.

Train drivers in six French towns and cities, including Strasbourg, voted to return to work yesterday, although the majority of union branches vowed to continue the strike. Many postal employees, civil service workers and teachers are also striking back.

During the week, M Juppé backed down over a plan to restructure the state-owned rail network and reform civil service pension benefits, the two grievances that triggered the strike on November 24. However, M Juppé's radical overhaul of the welfare system, designed to cut France's

deficit in time for European monetary union, remains a crucial sticking point.

Force Ouvrière said tomorrow's demonstrations were designed to "push the Government to suspend its plan" for social security reform. The Government and Prime Minister have another card to play: by accepting negotiations at once, all night if necessary, M Blondel said, after sending a letter to M Juppé laying out a broad agenda for talks. In it, he



Vianet: backed call for earlier summit

noted: "We feel it is necessary, if we want to show a desire for conciliation at this meeting, to set the traditional conditions for a return to work after a long conflict." That has been interpreted as a demand for striking workers to be compensated for lost pay.

The communist-led CGT union also demanded that M Juppé bring the meeting forward and discuss a wider range of issues. "In order to be effective, talks must focus on subjects at the heart of the conflict," Louis Vianet, the head of the union, said.

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Clinton says US will not cut and run as long as Nato mission has a purpose

Bosnia war comes to formal end in Elysée splendour

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE Presidents of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia signed the Bosnian peace treaty in Paris yesterday, formally bringing Europe's bloodiest conflict since the Second World War to an end.

John Major, President Chirac of France, Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Russian Prime Minister, and Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, added their names to the document, officially to be known as the Bosnia-Herzegovina Peace Accord, as co-sponsors of a Nato-led peace force of about 60,000 soldiers prepared to deploy in Bosnia next week.

M Chirac, the host for the ceremony at the Elysée Palace, said that the memory of 200,000 people killed in 43 months of fighting could not be erased, but added: "We must make ourselves worthy of their memory, worthy of their suffering."

The agreement brokered in Dayton, Ohio, preserves a united Bosnia in name while dividing the region almost equally between the Serbs and a Croat-Muslim alliance and granting recognition to the "ethnically pure" mini-state of the Bosnian Serbs.

The signing took place before mutual recognition pacts between the three leaders of the former Yugoslav republics could be arranged. The three principal signatories, President Milosevic of Serbia, President Tudjman of Croatia and President Izetbegovic of Bosnia shook hands after the ceremony. "I feel like a man swallowing a bitter but useful medicine, but I can assure you we are signing this peace treaty with sincerity," President Izetbegovic said.

President Milosevic said that the treaty "does not solve all the problems between people who have been at war for years, but I am convinced a common language can be found".

President Clinton, who met the three leaders of former

Yugoslavia before the signing, said yesterday that, although American casualties were inevitable in Bosnia, the United States would not "cut and run" as long as the Nato mission had a purpose.

However, the most grudging congressional approval of US deployment in Bosnia yesterday gave the President the firmest political support for his Balkan peace mission and left him deeply exposed during an election year.

The war formally came to an end amid all the pomp and solemnity France could muster. Paris is 800 miles from Sarajevo and the ornate marble halls of the Elysée could hardly be further removed from the wreckage of Bosnia, a magnificent setting in which to declare, with cautious optimism, an end to one of the

ugliest chapters in modern history.

The Republican Guard, in their red, white and blue uniforms, shivered beneath their epaulettes and then snapped sharply to attention as each political leader rolled through the Elysée's vast gates yesterday morning.

Dwarfed by some of the most magnificent chandeliers in the world and surrounded by gilt, brocade and the leaders of 50 states, just before midday the leaders of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia signed the peace agreement. The peace is a new and fragile thing: the Elysée, built by Armand-Claude Mollet between 1718 and 1720, is old and solid but, as President Tudjman said yesterday, the emities that have convulsed Bosnia are older still.

The leaders of the former Yugoslav republics appeared momentarily awed by the solemn weight of protocol and international power arrayed at the Elysée. Presented with the accord documents, President Milosevic seemed uncertain where to sign and began flicking through the agreement, as if he might have to read it all again to make quite sure that nobody was hoodwinking him.

President Tudjman peeked sideways to see if he could get a clue from his Serbian counterpart on where to find the dotted line. French officials rushed forward to find the right page and President Izetbegovic sat back, pleased with himself he might, as he would later put it, be signing "without any enthusiasm", but at least he had found the right page before the others.

Parisians were less satisfied. They found fresh cause to grumble when the Esplanade des Invalides was turned into a helicopter pad for the visiting dignitaries, shutting surrounding streets and compounding the horrendous traffic jams caused by the public transport strike.

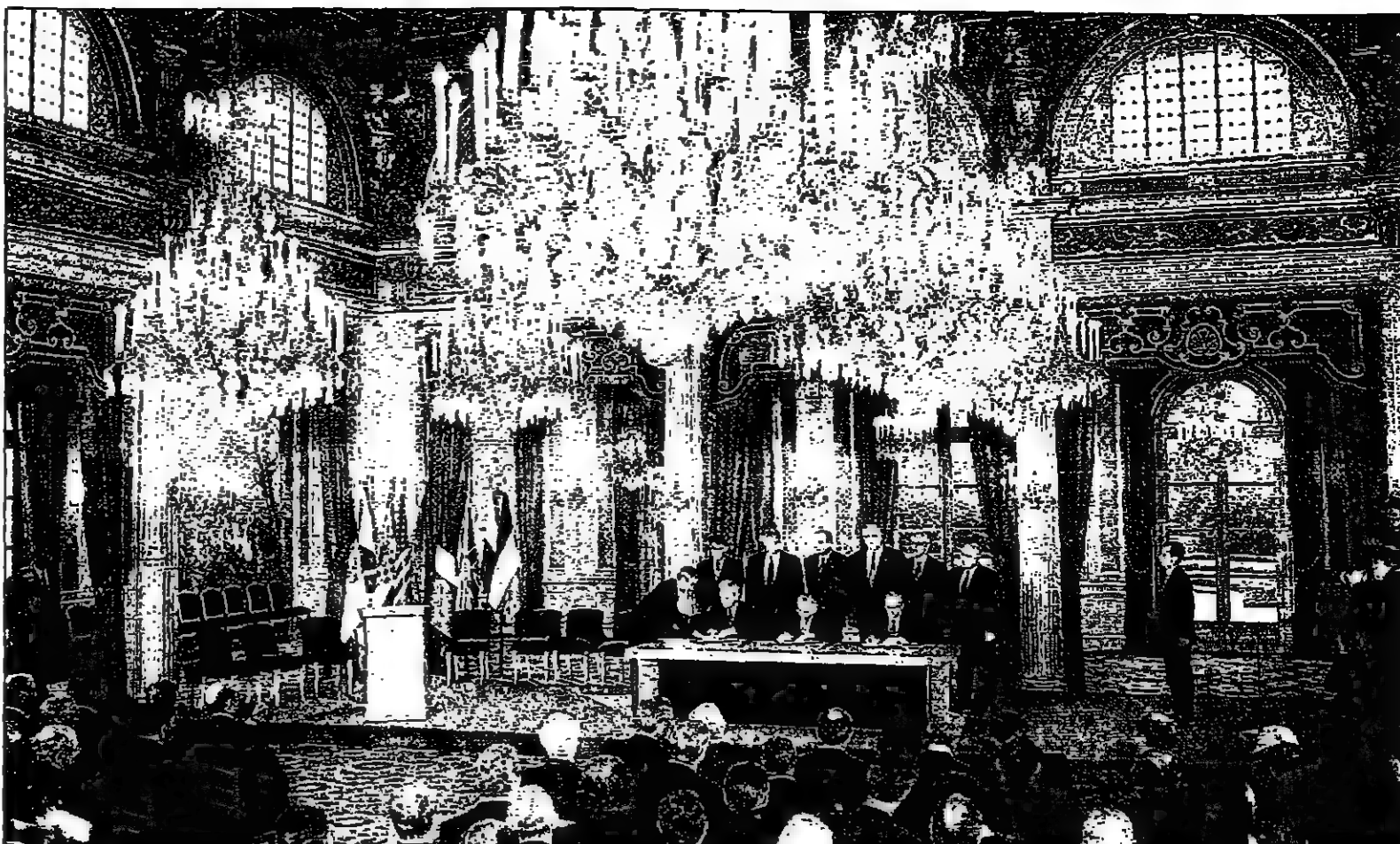
Cynicism and dread greet Paris signing

THE news from Paris produced no sign of jubilation in the snow-blanketed wilds of central Bosnia, where the graveyards seem fuller than the village streets and the only metropolis is of gutted houses (Anthony Loyd and Stacy Sullivan write).

"So they say it's finished do they?" said Asim, a Bosnian soldier. "I cannot believe such naivety. This is nothing more than a respite."

After three and half years of war in which one in twenty Bosnians died, it is perhaps not surprising that there were no street parties, but even so the level of cynicism over the accord bodes ill for peace.

In Sarajevo, machinegun fire rang out in celebration. Only a few hundred feet away, in Serb-held Grahovica, the shots were heard with dread. Ljiljana Majdov, 19, said: "Our nightmare is just beginning."



World leaders meet yesterday in the chandelied glory of the Salle des Fêtes in the Elysée Palace to witness the signing of the Bosnian peace accord. President Chirac reminded those present that the memory of 200,000 people killed in 43 months of fighting could not be erased

Nato firepower 'will ensure peace'

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S toughest-looking general had a word of warning yesterday for the "former" warring factions in the Balkans, as he prepared for his new job as commander of the British troops assigned to the 12-month Nato-led peace implementation operation.

Major-General Mike Jackson, the Russian-speaking commander of 3rd UK Division, said he would not shrink from using the formidable firepower he is taking to Bosnia-Herzegovina to enforce the peace agreement signed in Paris. The weapons at his disposal include the British Army's new 155mm AS90 artillery piece, Challenger tanks and anti-tank attack helicopters.

However, General Jackson said: "I am not looking to fight a pitched battle with anybody and I hope it will not become necessary." The Nato-led implementation force of 60,000 troops from 32 countries will have little in common with the United Nations force it is replacing, except that both are expected to operate with the consent of the three factions.

Speaking at the headquarters of 3rd Division at Bulford camp in Wiltshire, General Jackson, 51, said he hoped that

the desire for peace shown by the three leaders from Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia would be evident all the way down to the local level. He made it uncompromisingly clear that the rules of engagement he had been given would empower him to enforce any part of the treaty that local militia refused to implement voluntarily. General Jackson, who commanded the

'I am not looking to fight a pitched battle with anybody and I hope that it will not become necessary'

1st Battalion Parachute Regiment from 1984 to 1986, said: "We are there to implement the peace agreement which has been entered into voluntarily. I very much hope that consensus gets right down to the local level. If on an occasion a group at the local level do not wish to abide by the agreements, then the implementation force will enforce the provisions. I hope it will never come to

that, but if it does there will be no shrinking from it."

Britain is supplying 13,000 troops for the Nato-led peace mission, most of whom will come under General Jackson's direct command. He will lead a multinational division that could eventually consist of three armoured brigades: one British with a Dutch battle group attached, one Canadian with Czech, Polish and Pakistani battalions, and possibly a Pakistani brigade.

General Jackson hoped to have the tanks and artillery "in theatre" by Christmas and emphasised that he would expect to have total freedom of movement in every part of his area of responsibility.

The only limitation imposed on General Jackson is that during the first 30 days his force will be unable to intervene if any of the factions "torch" and loot houses in towns and villages that they are obliged to hand over under the Dayton accord.

The main body of General Jackson's divisional headquarters, which will be based at Gornji Vakuf, flew out from Stansted airport yesterday on a fleet of Ukrainian Ilushin aircraft.



Jackson: peace must prevail at local level

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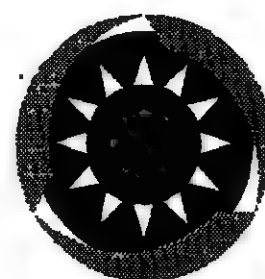
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Guards at Peking court believed Wei to be innocent

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

WEI JINGSHENG, the leading Chinese dissident sentenced this week to 14 years in jail, is regarded as innocent by some of the guards and court officials at his trial.

This was disclosed yesterday by court staff outraged at Wei's conviction for subversion. They noted that his sentence was longer than any given to the leaders of the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, they described the trial in a small courtroom before three judges, bailiffs and court staff. Wei's brother and one of his sisters, together with selected spectators.

The sources said that Wei, who is suffering from hypertension, remained seated throughout the five-hour trial but appeared calm and relaxed. The sources said the three main charges against him were raising money in Hong Kong and China through investing in a savings co-operative and art exhibitions; divulging state secrets to John Shattuck, the US Assistant Secretary of State, when they met in 1993 (Mr Shattuck was in Peking and Wei was briefly at liberty after almost 15 years in prison); and writing articles and letters, particularly for foreign readers.

Wei denied the charges with little emotion, the sources said. He testified that he had raised money for the families of victims of the Tiananmen crackdown, and political prisoners, and to support himself. He said his conversation with



Wei: staff outraged by his conviction

Mr Shattuck had ranged over questions of human rights and democracy.

He admitted publishing his views abroad, but said he had also made them clear in letters to Deng Xiaoping and President Jiang Zemin from his prison cell.

The sources say that many court workers and some of Wei's guards regard him as guilty of nothing and admire him. They see the trial as an indication that China's legal system is flawed. The sources add that foreign pressure over the case has alarmed Peking, which knows it cannot allow Wei to die in jail.

The trial — while it was held in secret — was "open" because the date and place were announced in advance. Wei's family was notified, and the result was immediately announced on the state radio. A Peking spokesman yesterday rejected "in the strongest

terms" the American condemnation of the trial.

Peking's English-language China Daily, which reported Wei's conviction on an inside page, said he had attempted to "raise a storm powerful enough to shake up the present Government". The article said Wei "was arrested on November 21 of this year". This is misleading: Wei had been in police custody since April 1, 1994, although not under formal charge.

In Hong Kong every Chinese-language newspaper, except the two funded by Peking, deplored the sentence.

One of Wei's sisters, who had visited Anthony Lake, President Clinton's National Security Adviser, described China's leaders as "an organised crime gang".

Chinese exiles in the US blamed President Clinton for divorcing human rights from trade, encouraging Peking to crack down on dissidents.



Two Hong Kong residents protest against the Wei trial's verdict in a metal cage padlocked to railings at the Xinhua News Agency, China's de facto embassy in the colony. Six people took part in the demonstration

Japanese disband Aum cult

FROM PEREGRINE HODSON IN TOKYO

THE Japanese Prime Minister, Tomiichi Murayama, has decided to apply an anti-subversion law to disband the Aum Shinrikyo cult.

The 1952 Subversive Activities Law was introduced at the height of the Cold War and aimed at suppressing extreme left-wing unrest, but until now it has never been applied. The decision is, in effect, a death sentence for the cult, which has been linked to the fatal sarin gas attacks on Japanese subways. On Wednesday a Tokyo court froze all the cult's assets and the group will be dissolved and prohibited from any activities or recruitment.

Mr Murayama has been slow to approve the use of the law because brutal police repression before and during the Second World War has left a legacy of popular mistrust about anti-subversion legislation.

At a meeting yesterday, however, Hiroshi Miyazawa, the Justice Minister, advised the Prime Minister that the conditions for invoking the law had been met.

Baboon cells for Aids man

BY NIGEL HAWKES SCIENCE EDITOR

IN AN attempt to save his life, an Aids activist was due to be given a transplant of baboon bone marrow in a San Francisco hospital last night.

Jeff Getty, 36, has tried virtually every experimental therapy on offer and has campaigned to be allowed to have the baboon transplant, even though some doctors believe it will shorten his life rather than extend it.

There is also a risk that he will catch other diseases from the baboon, which he could then pass on to nurses and doctors. Despite these risks, the therapy has been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration, an index of the desperation felt in America about the lack of progress in treating Aids.

"We cannot let fears of theoretical risks stop research," Mr Getty said in a statement.

The rationale for the treatment is that baboons are resistant to HIV1, the virus responsible for Aids. By replacing some of Mr Getty's stem cells — the bone marrow cells that manufacture the blood and immune system cells — with baboon stem cells, doctors hope to transplant the ability to fight the disease.

Arafat sets date for election

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

NOMINATIONS for the first Palestinian elections opened yesterday after the issuing of a decree by Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, that polling take place on January 20 for more than one million voters in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and annexed east Jerusalem.

Jan Blackley, spokesman for the 300 European Union observers, said that because of the "political sensitivities" surrounding Jerusalem, Arabs living there will vote in post offices and have their papers counted outside the city.

The voters will be asked to select 83 members of a legislative council and the new President of the Palestinian national authority, widely expected to be Mr Arafat. Israeli opponents of the peace process are concerned that the poll will provide unstoppable momentum to the Palestinian demand for an independent state.

Pressure is growing on opponents of Mr Arafat and his dominant Palestinian faction, Fatah, to put up candidates after declarations by the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, and others opposed to the Oslo peace deal that they would stage a boycott.

Settlers attacked: Two Jewish settlers were stabbed and slightly wounded in Hebron in the occupied West Bank yesterday by a Palestinian youth, who was shot dead by an Israeli policeman.

New York Muslims fell Christmas trees

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

THE Christmas trees have been taken down at New York's Grand Central station. They were ruled to be insufficiently Islamic, and might have offended Muslims.

The removal followed a complaint by a New York-based Islamic group about "sectarian symbols". The National Council on Islamic Affairs complained that it could find no example, amid the Christmas baubles, of the crescent and star, the symbols of Islam.

Metro-North Railroad, which runs the station, agreed to take down the trees. Donald Nelson, its president, replied to Muhammad Mehdi, the council's secretary-general, that "we appreciate and share your concerns". Mr Nelson was influenced by a recent Supreme Court ruling that public places must provide "equal access" to all religions. The move has not impressed commuters. Eric Donaldson

said: "They should have a great big tree with a star on the top — the works." Hector Santiago, an employee of Metro-North railways, said: "It just doesn't feel the same. What's the big deal?"

Mr Mehdi said: "We are simply asking for equal rights. America is no longer a Judeo-Christian society."

There are about ten million Muslims in the United States. Mr Mehdi dismissed arguments that there was no Muslim festival to enjoy at this time of year and cited USA Muslim Day, a newish festival that can be celebrated throughout December, allowing Muslims to "celebrate the bounties and freedoms of living in America".

After a brief conversation yesterday, this correspondent wished Dan Brucker, a Metro-North spokesman, a "happy Christmas". "No," he replied, "I think you mean happy holidays."

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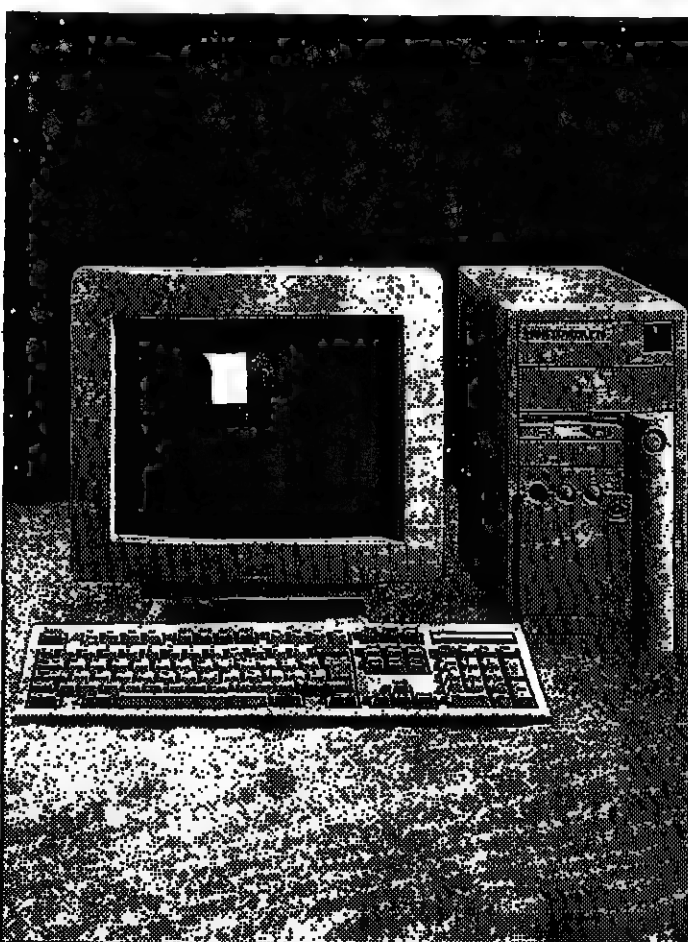
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OK, what's so funny about Jack Dee, then?

Jack Dee's transformation from an alternative comic to TV host has been greeted with derision. Does he deserve it?

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



THE new television variety show, *Jack Dee's Saturday Night*, took off last week on Channel 4 with Jack Dee, winner of this year's British Comedy Award, doing a routine of a cat vomiting a fur ball. Lynne Truss, in *The Times*, enjoyed that bit. Elsewhere, the show was thoroughly panned. ("Pretty grim" — *The Guardian*. "Jack it in, Dee" — *The Sun*.)

I met Jack Dee the day before the first show. Did he ever smile, people asked me. Not a lot. But then his cat, Poppet, had died a few days before, in his arms. And since the show was pre-recorded, he would be seen caressingly holding a sick cat ("Looking like an empty pyjama case"). "I felt really awful about that," he said. "Poppet was the most wonderful character. But my wife said, 'It's a tribute to him in a way'."

He is intelligent, articulate — a bit odd. But I have now watched the two forthcoming *Jack Dee Saturday Nights*, and they are dire. The acts are, with the exception of the Victor Borge-like Jim Tavaré, mostly garish, crass, vulgar. Jack does little except ask for a big hand for his next guest — and look sneery and cheated off.

The ITV network, Dee told me yesterday, is "delighted" with the viewing figures of eight million-plus. But this is not the same Dee of the cult *Jack Dee Live*. The one who gave us that classic dog versus cat routine. (Dog watches you putting up a shelf, wagging its tail: "I love you, you're so clever." A cat watches you with contempt: "It'll never stay up. You need a Rawplug in that wall.")

He has a feline look himself: a clean-shaven Jack Nicholson in a natty three-piece suit. Today he is in a brown check, like a prosperous pig farmer. The suits say: "I come from the working world. I'm no drop-out."

He was lucky in his name. Short, like him, and "you can have it huge on posters". He was born James, but became Jacques in French lessons at his first school. Pilgrims in the shadow of Winchester Cathedral: "A traditional, buttoned-up little prep school," says the Good Schools Guide, with a uniform of "Lovat green sweaters and bashful expressions".

He was a lazy and unmotivated boy. Pilgrims is famous for its choristers and he did not sing. "I specialised in excellence — recognising it I mean. Not creating it. Those who didn't excel were marginalised. And I was un-excellent in every field."

His parents took him away to a comprehensive. "But I don't think I would have been happy at any school." He ended up at a sixth form college — a convalescent period in his education: I got involved in the drama and began to uncover my own personality. But I still didn't work.

"I told my parents my A-level results on the phone: 'Not very good I'm afraid. An F and a D. What do you think I should do next?' And my dad said: 'I should have some breakfast if I were you.' Good advice, really."

"If I'd worked as hard at school as I do now, I'd have got to Cambridge. After school I became very disciplined, very focused."

First he focused on playing the role of commis-waiter: presentable, efficient. He decided he would have a chain of restaurants. "I would learn the whole thing: cooking, stock control, finance, paperwork, the bar. Catering college — forget it. You can get eight years' experience in three years in London. If you're bright, and never be out of work."

He managed Porters, the Earl of Bradford's restaurant in Covent Garden ("He would ring up from his estate on Sundays to ask how things were going, and would always make the same comment: 'Isn't the music a little loud?'"). Then I. S. Grunt's, the American pizza joint. Don't you want to go on stage? the waiters, resting actors, would ask. "I was always holding court and entertaining people."

Instead, he next focused on the Church. He was at the Ritz "the burn's rush of all jobs", and wandered into St James's, Piccadilly, encountering the charismatic rector, Donald Reeves. "He was an inspira-

He does little except ask for a big hand for his next guest

tion, very kind to me. I was 24 and very confused. I was on the wrong train and didn't know where to get off. And this coincided with a spiritual experience which I think was an invention of my subconscious. I was quite nutty about God for a year."

"I would let the Bible fall open at a page and convince myself that the passage conferred some meaning. So life became somewhat intense and

codified for a while. Very strange. I realise now I had a kindergarten idea of religion. I felt I was being told to give up my life to God and preach the message. I wasn't sure what the message was. But celibacy was part of it."

Reeves astutely let him see the Director of Ordinands, who realised at once that Dee was unsuitable material for the pulpit. (Christian charity, you note, is entirely absent from his stage persona.) "And I didn't go to church; that was a bit of a drawback in an ordinand. I thought of it as being about performing and expressing yourself."

I didn't ever watch telly. I was totally unaware of *The Young Ones*, didn't know who Alexei Sayle and Ben Elton were.

"So when I did walk into the Comedy Store it was a total eye-opener. There was Paul Merton, Julian Clary, the Joan Collins Fan Club, Jeremy Hardy. I wanted to be part of it. I felt they'd all started without me, and I knew I had that spark. I decided to stop feeling that I could only be a spectator in life. I thought, I'm going to be a player."

"So I had a go, put my name down and got up on stage: it was 2am, so most of the audience had left, except the drunken residue. I was only on for a few minutes but the guy who runs the Store said, you must come back."

"It was the big moment, the blinding light, the missing link, and I'd found it. You're a comedian, and that's what's been wrong. When I fooled around at school and got a laugh, it never occurred to me that that was a thing you could use in life."

He was still a barman off Oxford Street when an agent rang and offered to represent him on the college circuit. Dee wore a jacket and tie even then: "With a student audience it means you're not trying to ingratiate yourself." He started doing corporate conferences — a no-win situation, huge dance floor between you and the audience. No infection of laughter. And hecklers can take over the show — so you come off feeling as if you've

been in a fight. When the gloves are off, audiences are quite surprised at how low I'll go to undercut them." In 1991 he was Most Promising Newcomer in the Comedy Awards.

Dee is now 34, which counts as young these days. His early comic heroes were Bob Newhart, Peter Sellers, Peter Cook. Now he had met Newhart and Bob Monkhouse. "Has Bob ever found those joke books he lost?" I asked. "Don't think so." "Do

It was the big moment, the light, the missing link

you keep books of jokes now?"

"I've got his books." He met his wife Jane when he was running a restaurant called Jake's, in Fulham. She rang him up one day and asked him out to dinner; Jack told her he was too busy. "Well I was," he says. He was spending all his time off at the comedy clubs. "She never lets me forget it. We have a quarrel about it, about once a quarter."

They live in a Victorian terraced house in Wandsworth with their daughters, Hattie and Phoebe. My children love Jack Dee. Luckily the college circuit has a collective mental age of 14, a short attention span and a babyish response to anything about vomit, animals or the lavatory. I can see that nobody can resemble a rabbit putting on Oil of Ulay as Dee can. But what about broadening his appeal?

"Yes, I'm always vaguely aware that this is only the beginning. I want to be able to make the grown-ups laugh as well, not to be exclusive. But you share a comedy shorthand with a young audience, you watch the same TV shows, you listen to the same bands, you know they're of a like mind."



Jack Dee — a Jack Nicholson type in a natty three-piece suit with a good line in sneers

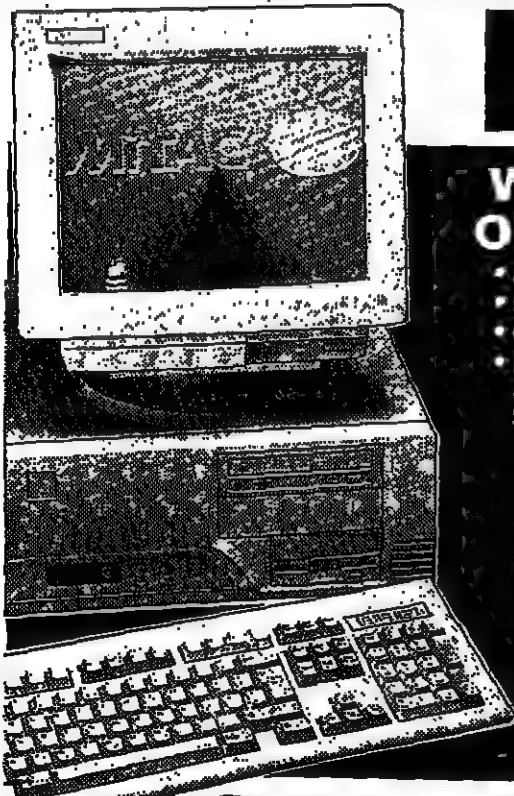
But how would he get on without "shag" and "crap" to get a burst of laughter from infantile audiences? Lenny Bruce started it, now they all do it: it is not clever, and not funny. Any of the genuinely inventive minds on *Whose Line is it Anyway?*, *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* and so on, can prosper without it.

As the Sun's TV critic Garry Buswell said, the ingredient any variety show needs warmth, and "Dee has the personality of a toothache". It seems to me utterly amazing that Caroline Hook's Mrs Merton — who does have warmth, and remarkable adaptability (e.g. when having to deal with a silent,

menacing Chris Eubank) — got nowhere in the British Comedy Awards this year. The late Frankie Howerd once told me "you can't really explain humour, except that it's very much a matter of one's cup of tea". Quite. It is a precarious business, stand-up comic fame. Not for the insecure.

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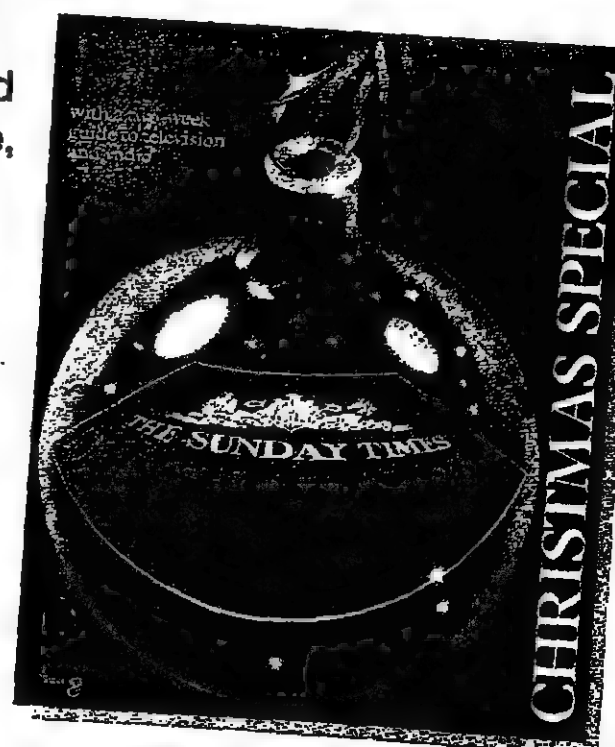
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THEY CRY WITH THEIR BOOTS ON

In *The Magazine* Zoë Heller goes to a boot camp in the US to see if the verbal abuse and five-mile runs make model citizens out of delinquents

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

The staying power of the corset



Corset-maker Ian Voller knows the ropes: "You should lace it until you have a gap at the back of one to one and a half inches on the waistline"

They prod your ribcage, leave you gasping for breath and make you look like an extra from *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. Corsets, say the feminists, are uncomfortable, demeaning and, in this age of Lycra, totally unnecessary. Yet this Christmas women will be taking deep breaths and clinging to the bedpost, while their mothers, flatmates or partners haul them into contraptions which make medieval torture instruments seem positively enlightened.

Ever since Madonna encased her breasts in Jean Paul Gaultier cones, every smart girl has realised the appeal of underwear as outerwear. This winter, however, trendsetters have begun to realise the value of underwear as underwear.

Pride and Prejudice convinced a nation of bra burners that a heaving décolletage was the only way to attract a Mr Darcy in time for Christmas. At the autumn fashion collections, hourglass girls eschewed down the catwalk all décolletage and derrière with only a wasp waist to separate them. Fashion victims soon realised that it would take more than a year's worth of step classes to produce the same effect. But a casing of whalebone and a sharp tug of laces could construct the necessary curves in seconds.

"Everyone is looking to a more structured look, as a backlash to grunge," says Kate Reardon, the style director of Tailor. "Women are wearing

Breathe in, ladies — the corset is back, worn as both under and outerwear. Julia Llewellyn Smith bones up on the intricacies of laces and stays

neat tailored suits and the high street is churning out corset dresses for evening wear. Corsets are like high heels; they may be uncomfortable but they are enormously flattering.

"People are prepared to put up with discomfort to get a fantastic figure," says Cheryl Gordon of Agent Provocateur, where the trendies of Soho buy corsets to wear under jackets with jeans. "When I wear mine I can't sit down for the first hour, but I struggle on because it looks great."

Ian Voller of Voller's Corsets in Portsmouth, which manufactures corsets for department stores such as John Lewis and Harvey Nichols, says that business has increased by 400 per cent since 1991, when he took over from his uncle. "We had to take on six new staff this Christmas to cope with demand," he says.

It takes two hours to make up a corset in satin or cotton. "The fabrics have to be very rigid so there is no give," says Mr Voller. The corset is cut and stitched, binding is inserted and steel bones (whalebone is no more) inserted. Finally, the eyelets for laces are put in. "Your corset measurement is two to four inches below that of your natural waist size," says Mr Voller. "Our sizes

range from 18 to 38 inches, although the most popular are between 22 to 26 inches. You should lace it until you have a gap at the back of one to one and a half inches on the waistline. People want to be comfortable in their corsets, so we don't sell many 18-inch ones, except to Japan, nor many very large ones either. Most of our customers have lovely figures."

Older customers, he says, are still buying corsets as underwear, but younger buyers will wear theirs as evening wear, with a long skirt. "Apparently, Shirley Bassey bought one the other day and Glenn Close bought four."

At Fenwick's department store in Bond Street, Voller's corsets have been selling like hangover cures after a Christmas party. "We have been selling basques for ages, but since we started stocking proper lace-up corsets at £59 in August we have had to restock constantly," says a spokeswoman, Mary Flack. "We also sell £400 brocade embroidered corsets from Paris and we are on our third delivery. They are extremely enhancing and people are very impressed. Our girls lace you into them in

the shop, so then when you take it home you only have to fasten the poppers at the front. We didn't think people had the time or money for a lady's maid these days."

Ever since Bronze-Age Cretan maidens decided to fight the flab with wood-enforced garments in the year 2,000BC, women have been doing everything they can to whittle their waist. "Anthropologists believe that the waist is the thing that makes women most attractive to men, and breasts and bottoms are important only in that they accentuate it. A small waist proves that the woman isn't already pregnant with another man's child."

The great seductresses all found the corset to be an indispensable seduction tool. Nell Gwyn wandered the streets of London with a tray of oranges balanced strategically beneath her milky, heaving bosom. The legendary Scarlett O'Hara clung to the four-poster bed, urging faithful Mammy to give her an 18-inch waist, before going out to garner proposals from scores of besotted suitors.

Neither of these women had much in common with the Victorians who would visit their physicians with splinters, damaged livers and often displaced ribs. Even those who suffered no injury frequently found their undergarments stained with blood. A few decades later, the overt sexuality of the *fin-de-siècle* basque in velvet and satin recalls Calamity Jane saloon queens and Parisian music-halls. Waists were liberated at the

factor. A woman will wear one with a masculine jacket and let you have a quick flash."

Americans have already taken the corset to their bosoms. For her role as a gun-toting biker babe in *Barb Wire* Pamela Anderson was squeezed into a black leather contraption that reduced her 23-inch waist to a bone-crunching 17 inches. For the cover of April's *Vanity Fair* Nicole Kidman donned a Dolce and Gabbana corset, while Jennifer Jason Leigh was in a girdle.

For true aficionados, control can become a way of life. In this month's *American Vogue*, Pearl, a New York corsetière, shows off his 18-inch waist, the result of wearing a corset 23 hours a day, removing it only to wash.

Those who think they can achieve the same effect with an hour a day at the gym, a Wonderbra and control-top knickers are missing the point. Corsets are about allure, and no amount of step classes can give you that.

A strait-laced week

MONDAY: Waists, say the style police, are this season's must-have fashion accessory, along with the Prada bag and Gucci hipsters. *Julia Llewellyn Smith* writes. This is bad news for a girl with a stomach to rival that of a champion darts player. Desperate measures are required. I call Ian Voller of Voller's Corsets in Portsmouth. Ian can tell that I am nervous at the idea of encasing my torso in a contraption that my great-grandmother would have thought anachronistic.

"Don't worry," Ian says sweetly. "These days putting on a corset should be no more uncomfortable than a pair of tight jeans."

TUESDAY: The Times workforce is amazed to hear gasps, squeals and cries of "Stop, stop now!" emanating from the ladies' lavatories. Unlike Lizzie Bennet, I do not have a devoted sister Jane to haul me into my Voller's black satin corset: so Anji, my colleague, has volunteered. Ian has sent diagrams to help us, which bear an alarming resemblance to instructions for producing the Christmas roast.

Trussing complete, I feel like an early Victorian martyr. All the air has been compressed out of me, and if someone were to stick a pin into my bosom it would probably burst. But the effect when I look in the mirror is literally breathtaking. I look a size smaller, have an ironing-board stomach and a perfect Coke-bottle figure. OK, it hurts, but so would the alternative 1,000 sit-ups a day.

WEDNESDAY: First, the bad news: you may look like Jessica Rabbit in your corset, but you feel like Miss Piggy. You no longer walk,

you mince. You don't bend over for fear of being cut in two. You find yourself having to abandon a sausage baguette halfway because there is nowhere in your (22-inch) stomach for it to go. The good news: a miraculously improved posture, Barbie doll curves, and a pneumatic bosom that heaves prettily.

THURSDAY: I have an insurmountable problem. What do you wear over a corset? A baggy garment is pointless, but a slinky one

Marilyn Monroe about to break into *Happy Birthday, Mr President*.

FRIDAY: As my corset will not work as underwear, I resolve to wear it as outerwear, teamed with leggings. The effect is meant to be Vivien Leigh in her boudoir, but instead turns out as Gloria Gaynor in an ill-fitting boob tube. Realise that although my belly is now concave, I have a new figure nightmare to contend with: flabby upper arms. There is also a decency

question: the top of the corset runs just above my nipples and any sudden movement, let alone dancing, is out of the question. Nor will I be able to talk to anyone taller than me, who will have an aerial view of my cleavage. Put a jacket on top of the ensemble and resolve to remove it only if very drunk. Having been unable to eat all week, this may happen very quickly.

At that night's party, all my friends comment on my new voluptuousness, and demand to know my secret. Confess to a couple of girlfriends, who insist on dragging off the jacket and making me give them a swirl. No one is sure whether I am making a witty post-feminist statement or am determined to find myself pinned up against the wall by some piece of pond life, sweetly inquiring whether I would like any help undressing later. I replace the jacket.

Sway over to an old male friend, who slips his arm around my waist as he kisses my cheek. "What are you wearing?" he shrieks. "A corset," I mutter, kicking him viciously. "Oh yes," he says. "I knew it felt familiar. You could be my granny."



The author in an Agent Provocateur corset

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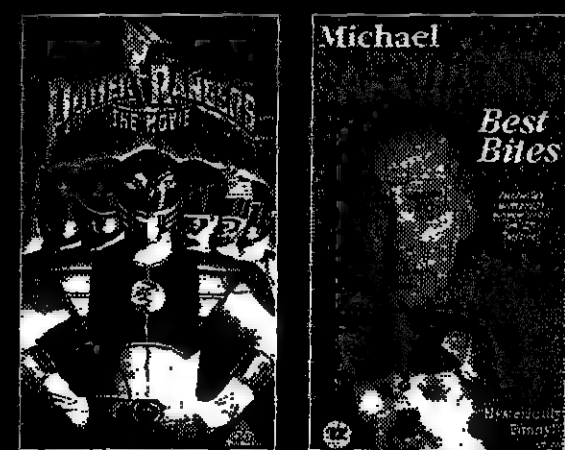
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**'Everyone
wants a
structured
look as a
backlash
to grunge'**

beginning of the 20th century, but constrained again in the 1950s when the smoothness of line required to wear Christian Dior's New Look became the fashionable Holy Grail. By then man-made materials had replaced whalebone, with the result that these garments were very definitely meant to stay under clothes. "I remember seeing models in their waspies, as we called them, at fashion shows and there was no element of come-hither about them, they looked horrendous," says Rosemary Hawthorne, a clothes historian. "If you put your arm round their waist, it would feel rigid." Today corsets are very definitely about the titillation

INSIDE
SECTION
2

Tasteless? Arguably.
Mindless? Probably.
Profitable? Certainly.
Paul Sexton charts
the amazing rise
of the Eternal record
label Page 31



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Race riot or just class war?

Paul Barker reflects on why Brixton is ablaze again

John Major keeps reminding us that Brixton is where he grew up. It is also where he entered politics. But Brixton has just reaffirmed its greater fame as the riot capital of Britain. After 1981 and 1985, we can now add 1995 to the battle scars.

In Brixton in 1981, petrol bombs were thrown for the first time on the British mainland. Lord Scarman thereafter wrote a celebrated report in which he described that year's confrontation as essentially an anti-police riot. Dishearteningly, the new confrontation made one think that nothing had changed in the intervening decade-and-a-half. Yet this was the first area of London to have a police consultative committee — regarded as a model to be followed elsewhere. Millions of pounds of urban regeneration money have been poured in. But some of this went into the very buildings that the latest rioters set alight.

"Brixton has acquired a symbolic importance for the black community," says Professor David Smith, the leading author of studies on race and policing in Britain. "It is the headquarters of Afro-Caribbeanism." In this role, it has taken over from Notting Hill, which still has its annual carnival, but which is now home to few West Indian families.

The rioting is a self-inflicted wound

The Notting Hill Carnival has gradually lost the link with riot and danger which historians associate with carnivals down the ages. Brixton undoubtedly has the aura of danger. Yet it, too, is far from being a black ghetto. Many houses have been gentrified by middle-class whites.

Is what happened in Brixton really a race riot? Or is it a class riot, bringing together the poor in one explosive mix? Many of the rioters — in 1985 and in other years — were white.

The local borough, Lambeth, is far from being the worst-off in Britain. The East London boroughs of Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets jostle for that grim title. Professor Smith speaks optimistically of the emergence of a black middle class. (This has been slow to appear. Most West Indian immigrants began a long way down the class scale: they came to Britain to carry out semi-skilled and unskilled jobs.) But Brixton is pockmarked by neighbourhoods where, among both whites and blacks, to have a job seems like a distant dream.

Though young black men are especially hostile to the police, studies show that all young working-class men in big cities tend to be hostile. The big division isn't race, it is age and class. The middle-aged and the middle-class are the greatest supporters of law and order.

Looking at urban change in the United States, a black American sociologist, William Julius Wilson, wrote a book called *The Declining Significance of Race*. By this he meant that within American cities, class divisions were becoming increasingly important. Middle-class blacks, helped by equal opportunities

policies, were moving out of the ghettos. The old territory was being abandoned to "gangsters", and to young men who proudly adopted the old scornful name "nigger" to mark themselves off from the newly suburbanised blacks.

Something similar may be happening in Brixton. But though black and white may riot together, blacks have (so far) taken the lead. In Professor Smith's words, "Hostility to the police is important in the development of a politicised black identity. The police are the most convenient representatives of what is seen as repression."

This was epitomised by the headlines in the black newspaper *The Voice* after Wayne Douglas's death in Brixton police station. Douglas was arrested after apparently breaking into a family's flat and threatening them with a knife. The paper said he had been beaten up. After the rioting, a director of Brixton Challenge was quoted as saying, "The reason this is happening is because the police killed another black guy." Yet this is an organisation set up to help Brixton to go on to better things.

It is hard not to ask "What hope is there?" The chances of businesses deciding to locate in and around Brixton will have fallen. The chances of coaxing good teachers into its schools will have shrunk. Whatever happened to Wayne Douglas in custody — and we do not yet know — the latest rioting is a self-inflicted wound.

Experience shows that it is very hard to help a district to pull itself up by its bootstraps. After the riots of 1981 — in Tooting as well as in Brixton — Michael Heseltine wrote a Cabinet memo headed "It took a riot". He focused, then, on Liverpool more than on Brixton. He invented the Merseyside Urban Development Corporation as the lever of change. Little social change has resulted. The galleries, cafes and trinket shops of the heritage Albert Dock sparkle on the waterfront. But Liverpool's actual docks are racked with strikes yet again. The most flourishing local industry, gambling, is threatened by the National Lottery. And there is hardly a black face to be seen in Albert Dock (or, come to that, in the real docks).

In Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police have a Commissioner as shrewd as they are ever likely to have. On the one hand, he took a high risk, in launching Operation Eagle (against street crime) when he said that the West Indian community must accept that most muggers are black. On the other hand, he knows better than anyone the importance of making sure that law-breakers and law-abiders don't make common cause.

Say not the struggle naught availed. We just have to keep trying. A city has never been an easy place to run.

The author is a senior fellow of the Institute of Community Studies.



Councils of despair

The little man in his office cannot resist wielding his tiny power

When I see a headline reading "Man takes lawn into his own hands to bury his bungalow" I prick up my ears. I have seen all sorts of sights in my long life, including a totally plastered Cabinet minister falling down two flights of stairs, and I simply cannot understand how he was doing it. (The bungalow man, not the Cabinet minister.)

So I examined the subject more closely, and when I had fully understood how to say nothing of why a man would bury his bungalow, I was rather less amused. Indeed, I made haste to wipe the smile off my face. For this story is far from funny. Mr Trevor Sedgbeer and his wife Lauretta live in Devon, and Mr Sedgbeer built a bungalow; many do, and in this case did. But he built his bungalow — in fact, printers, for the swiftness of what now comes: he built his bungalow without planning permission. Now, short of murder, there is nothing so wicked as a man who builds a bungalow without planning permission, or, to be more exact, there is nothing so wicked as a man who builds a bungalow when the man who deals out permissions has not given his say-so.

I have said a thousand times that power should be used upside down: the bigger the slice of it the more wary the user should be, and vice versa. And when it comes to a Devon bungalow permission-giver, the very tiniest scrap of the heady stuff should be used only with the head immersed in a bowl of very cold water.

It is not clear whether the offence was that the bungalow was in the wrong place, or whether it had not been approved, or both. But after much wrangling, the courts demanded the destruction of Mr Sedgbeer's bungalow.

Mr Sedgbeer complied with the order to destroy his bungalow, which came down flat. Now I have, in my time, done some ruin things, but never before have I found myself invited to go about digging holes for bungalows, and I politely demurred. But on inquiring further, I learnt that to bury a bungalow means shifting several hundred tons of earth. It seems that Mr Sedgbeer was in earnest when he said that he would give the authorities their wish with knobs on — several hundred tons of knobs. The battle continued: for a time, any member of the council passing by would have seen nothing but the flatness that had been

required. But then, it seems, at least as the council would have it, Mr Sedgbeer's home had risen from the earth — grumpy no doubt — and the struggle was renewed: was the earth flat enough, or had Mr Sedgbeer merely repeated his crime? He says: "I have obeyed the court ruling by taking the building down to the original ground level of the site. I have done all they have asked me to do." It is not for me to adjudicate, but what chills my blood is those terrible, those most terrible words, which came from the lips of someone in the council (they always come from the lips of someone in the council): "We cannot allow one person to contravene the law while making others abide by it. We are determined that the building should be removed."

Bernard Levin

Oh, sing it to the birds, play it on the accordion, whistle it while you work, but it will still be the same ancient rubric: "What if everybody did it?"

What indeed — for Mr Sedgbeer has just been put in prison for a three-month stretch for not destroying his home at the council's behest.

Oh, what if everybody did it? I am tempted to answer that the council members would be beside themselves with joy.

But now we must go from Devon to Leicestershire. Here, there is no time of amusement, even if there was before. A Mr Pickavant had an 18th-century cottage on his farmland, which he was lovingly restoring. But the council (oh, yes, there is always someone from the council) said to Mr Pickavant that there could be only one dwelling on the farm, a bungalow, which Pickavant senior would occupy. But the 18th-century dwelling was for Pickavant junior, who was to live in it with his lady. But if there is a bungalow and an 18th-century cottage on the same farm — well, two ones make two.

Mr Sedgbeer was reasonably young and sprightly. Mr Pickavant is 67, and when his struggle began (oh, yes, there was a struggle) he

collapsed; he came round just in time to see his world crushed. And he was the right word, because the council (oh, yes, yes, yes, there was someone from the council to watch, and for all I know to look smug) had engaged ten policemen — six of whom were in riot gear — and a giant digger. And the digger was not a toy one. It worked.

And the work of four years (not counting the people in the 18th century who started the cottage) was destroyed.

Yes, yes, yes, the law is the law and must be obeyed. Mr Pickavant had already been fined £500, and a judge had said he was "stubborn and foolish", which indeed he probably was, though it would be a good idea if the judge in question took a 40-year holiday.

But that again is not the point. The point is that someone from the council said — oh, but you know what I am going to say now: the people from the council said: "If we failed to enforce the order, it would open the floodgates for everyone else to build houses without planning permission in the countryside."

Ah, the angels weep; you can hear them clearly if the wind is in the right direction. And their tears speak volumes: "enforce the order", "floodgates", "contravene the law", "if we failed to", "while making others abide by it", "planning permission", "planning permission", "planning permission".

But now we are in the countryside, where things are done differently, but if we pack up and head for the smoky air of the town, do not think that councils have disappeared and we can smile. Because Mr Brian Godfrey of Ilkerton has nothing to smile about.

He is a greengrocer by trade, and he displays his wares on the pavement, as countless greengrocers have done through the ages. Indeed, I am told that that has been the same site in Ilkerton for some 30 years at least.

Of course, his boxes are put against the window of his shop, not on the kerb side, and of course he pays rent to the council for a foot and a half of the pavement. But Mr Godfrey has now come up against the same kind of people as those you have just been reading about.

Thirty years have passed with this familiar scene, but now the council (well, of course it was the council — who did you think it was?) has decided to puff out its chest and ruin Mr Godfrey. It claims that his 18 inches of pavement are dangerous, especially for blind or disabled people, though it seems that there has been no accident at all with Mr Godfrey's wares. He says:

People like to see fresh fruit and vegetables in front of the shop, not through the window. It is something you see in high streets everywhere. It is ridiculous to suggest I have no need for safety. I have had no complaints, but the council cannot accept that they might be wrong. We have customers who are in wheelchairs. Except for the council, nobody has complained.

When Mr Godfrey stood his ground and ignored the council (hurrah! may there be many more ignorings!), he was taken to court by Derbyshire County Council — there's splendour for you! — and the wowers lost! The magistrates — may the sun shine upon them — ruled that he was not causing an obstruction. The victorious Mr Godfrey, as a handsome token of reconciliation, announced that he was going to halve the space of his display. And what followed? But you know, of course, what followed.

Smartering from the defeat, the council asked the High Court to overturn the magistrates' ruling. And alas, it did. The judge — may he get chilblains — gave the wrong answer, and you could hear the wrong smiles on the faces of the county council. And another innocent, useful, happy, hard-working man is ruined. And oh, yes, you will certainly know what comes now in this case. Yes, the boss-man did say — these were the very words: "If we had made an exception for Mr Godfrey, a precedent could have been set which could have affected the rights of pavement users throughout the country." That's glory for you!

Remember the rule? The rule that says the smaller the quantity of power, the greater the yearning to exercise it? And have I not just demonstrated that sad truth?

Philip Howard



Some lessons in home ecology work better than others

Of course we need to preserve our biodiversity. Bring back our otters. Save the red squirrel. I am prepared even to have my "aahs" wrung because the horned dung-beetle has not been sighted since 1955, although it does not look as cuddly as the aforementioned species.

But you lose some, you win some. Danish biologists have discovered a new phylum or life form called *Pandora*. She sounds even more problematic than a dung-beetle. For *Pandora* lives on the tips of the lobster, looks like an animated cold sore, and has two penises and a circular mouth ring next to her/his anus. Linda McCartney has just spent £3,000 to keep the fastest turkey in the land from stuffing. Dempsey, not quite a macho bull terrier, has been saved from execution for the less certain fate of going to live with Brigitte Bardot. And West Midlands Travel has given a hamster called Sweep a free travel pass for having erroneously charged it 45p for a ticket.

How serendipitous of the Birmingham bus company to have hit upon this latest threatened species. You may think that there are plenty of hamsters in their natural habitat of plastic cages in kindergartens, pedalling their tiny treadmills through the night with the irritating narcissism of joggers. But their numbers are declining.

It was decided that at six, Harry is old enough to keep a hamster. I demurred, because hamsters are characterless and best split-roasted by Peruvian Little Hamsterburger salesmen. But also because the household is unhealthy for them. It is already kernel to three generations of Jack Russell terriers. To add a hamster is like billarding a Christian in the lion-cage.

Accordingly, a tricky navigation was made to the finest hamster-breeding ground in London, and a long-haired apricot-coloured hamster was bought. I thought it should be named for a plant, like the Russells: Heather, Haggis, Poppy and so on. Parsnip, I said. So it was called Hamish. The Russells were fascinated by their new flame, straining like greyhounds in the slips, and also at short-leg, even at its used litter. And within a day, Hamish and cage had been dislodged by Russell high-jump record, and Hamish lay dead of heart-attack from terror at being attacked by three sabre-toothed monsters in the proportion of Nelson's Column to a human.

I thought the point of pets was to teach children the facts of death as well as the duty of looking after other species. But the majority view was that Harry would never forgive the Russells if he was told what had happened. So Hamish was buried in the garden surreptitiously and silently at dusk of night. And a substitute Hamish was introduced to his cage. However, Hamish Mark II had short hair and understandably, recognising the slaughterhouse he had come to, he bit. The former biodiversity could be explained as a haircut from the local vet. But the latter was intolerable.

So Hamish was returned to store, and Hamish Mark III was smuggled into the cage. He had long hair and was the right colour, but there was a white blaze on his shoulders. This was explained by saying hair could turn white from shock, as that of the grandmother Russell had on the spot where I once spilt coffee on her. But the next day Hamish Mark III in his travelling cage was left in the car with the Russells while a child was dropped off. In the split-second before human biodiversity was restored, Hamish was spread all over the seats, and the car was full of blood and smug Russells.

There was no possibility of profit in any more *Doppelgänger* stories. So we now have a long-haired grey hamster, called Patch. Three times in three days we have experienced the shock-horror of *The Sun's* most famous headline, "Freddie Starr Ate My Hamster". So remember, a hamster is not just for Christmas. It is just for Friday — and possibly just for Friday breakfast. The point of pets is to teach children that animals are not cuddly toys, but also, serial killers. Cats bring home trophy pigeons. The Russells sometimes catch a squirrel in the park to the horror of the Scandinavian tourists and causing their Bad Samaritan walker to walk rapidly by on the other side. At the rate we are going, the UN convention on endangered species must make a new entry under "H" for the delicious little rodents.

Little urn

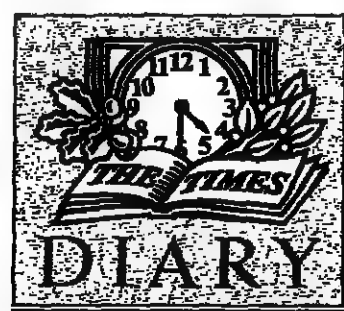
THE PRINCE OF WALES'S Christmas card, showing his two sons apparently popping out of terracotta pots like characters in a Samuel Beckett play, could not have been more appropriate. His Royal Highness is planning a princely gardening roadshow, along the lines of *Gardeners' Question Time*.

He is booked to appear as part of a panel of gardening experts to answer questions about Highgrove's gardens and horticultural matters at the Opera House in Buxton, Derbyshire.

Sources at Buckingham Palace suggest that the event, to be held

in late January before a fee-paying audience, will be repeated at other venues. The Prince will be joined on stage by Rosemary Verey, his gardening consultant at Highgrove, and by the Duchess of Devonshire, who is among the most green-fingered of aristocrats.

Last spring, the Prince admitted to a lifelong passion for urns and pots, and described himself as the "potty prince" when he first spoke in public about his gardens at Highgrove. He said he collects clay vessels on his foreign travels. Many are 3ft high, he said, and some had caused delivery prob-



lems — in particular one which he asked to be sent from Assisi. "When it arrived on a lorry in a large packing case it was addressed simply to the Prince of Wales, Tisbury," he said. "They took it straight to the local pub."

No takers

DOESN'T anybody out there want to conduct a famous opera company? At the London Coliseum, English National Opera is searching for a new music director after the shock resignation of young Sir Edward. But despite the allure of working with ENO's roly-poly boss Dennis Marks, everybody seems to have declined the offer.

Paul Daniel of Opera North in Leeds is said to have spurned the chance to move to the bright

lights. Ivor Bolton, a rising conductor of the Baroque persuasion, has also turned down the opportunity. And so has David Atherton — although the ENO management still has hopes of twisting his baton-arm.

Not tonight

RELATIONS between the grinning crooner Des O'Connor and the hamster-eating comic Freddie Starr have plumbed new depths, after a television interview between the two became so difficult that it will not be screened. Thames Television says only that the exchange went "too far" for the interview to appear on *Des O'Connor Tonight*.

Matters went from bad to worse, apparently after Freddie Starr spontaneously blew his nose on Des O'Connor's tie. But yesterday the coiffured chat-show host was glossing over the affair. "What's in a tie?" he said. "Freddie once ruined an entire Armani suit when he pulled me into a fountain."

Body building

SIR RICHARD BODY, the maverick MP for Holland with Boston, was not in the mood to offer John

Major any solace on Wednesday night, even though the Government's majority has fallen to just five.

Sir Richard, who no longer takes the Conservative whip and is therefore counted as an Opposition MP, was holding court at the Private Eye Christmas party. He dismissed suggestions that he was about to return to the government fold with a wave of his arm: "My negotiating position is strengthening all the time," he explained.

● *Talk in the House of Commons yesterday was of an extraordinary event witnessed by Members in the Commons smoking room. Bill*



Cash, the arch Euro-sceptic, was seen to be talking for the first time in public to Ted Heath, the man who took us into Europe. The festive season is surely upon us.

Titillation

PRODUCTION of a documentary about Page 3 girls, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of their first appearance, has caused tension among the politically correct at BBC North.

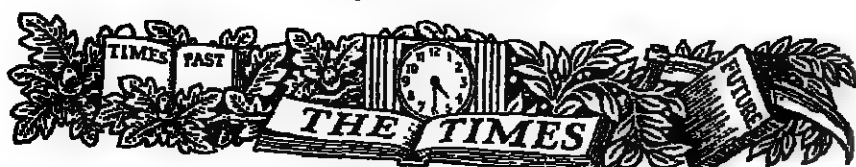
For the purposes of research, pictures of semi-clad models were hung in the production office. This raised objections among certain members of staff. Harmony was restored only when strategically placed Post-it notes were stuck over the assets that made the girls famous.

● *Visitors to the Westminster offices of John Redwood's think-tank, Conservative 2000, will soon be met by an inspirational collection of modern British art on display. A West End gallery — doubtless with Euro-sceptic credentials — has lent Redwood 14 pictures to decorate his walls, in the hope that his well-heeled supporters may be tempted to buy.*

P.H.S



The Christmas card: are the princes rehearsing *Endgame*?



FLAMES OF GREED

Brixton should not be blamed for its tiny criminal minority

The spectacle of Brixton in flames this week has evoked bad memories of the riots of 1981 and 1985. For a few hours, its streets raged with a fury not seen in this part of London for many years. Most chilling was the vicious attack on PC John Tishaw, who might well have been killed had a motorist not intervened. No policeman has forgotten the murder of Keith Blakelock during the Broadwater Farm riots in Tottenham a decade ago. It seemed, for a dreadful moment, that history was repeating itself.

Yet it was not. The disturbance in Brixton on Wednesday night had almost nothing in common with the riots of 14 years earlier. In 1981, the area was riven by racial struggle; relations between police and public were poor; little was being done by outside agencies to address local unemployment. In his inquiry into the riots, Lord Scarman gave warning that action must be taken to save Brixton from complete social breakdown.

In the years since, extraordinary efforts have been made to improve Brixtonians' quality of life and to revitalise the local economy. Joblessness remains a severe problem and relations between the police and the community are far from perfect. But the circumstances of Wednesday's riot cannot be compared to the social context which spawned the disturbances of 1981. The riots 14 years ago were an upsurge of popular despair. This week's disorder was the criminal outburst of an irresponsible minority. It illustrated only how ruthlessly well-organised today's rioters have become and how quickly a legitimate political demonstration can degenerate into chaos. It has yet to be established whether the crowd had been infiltrated by far left groups but the

speed with which violence was whipped up was suspiciously reminiscent of other recent disturbances where evidence of orchestration by militants has subsequently come to light. The police must investigate thoroughly the possibility that the disorder was actively encouraged by anarchist elements.

The riot began as a peaceful picket outside Brixton police station in protest at the death in custody of 25-year-old Wayne Douglas, a matter which is being investigated by the Police Complaints Authority. There is some evidence that the speakers at the demonstration used inflammatory language: the civil rights lawyer Rudy Narayan is alleged to have said that he would not fret "if a policeman is killed because he is behaving badly".

The behaviour of the rioters suggests that greed was a more important motive for their disorder than racism. They raided a sports shop in search of trainers and designer sports kit. They besieged a restaurant, terrifying the customers, and helped themselves to food. What started as a peaceful demonstration against alleged police racism quickly became a looter's paradise. The only principle these rioters were defending was material self-interest.

As Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, said yesterday: "It wasn't Brixton that rioted last night. It was a small minority of thugs and criminals". In one night, they inflicted about £1 million of damage upon a community that can ill afford to pay for the repairs. In so doing, the rioters dealt a grievous blow to the area's plans for economic regeneration. The people of Brixton should not be confused with this criminal fringe element which disgraced their community this week.

BALANCE THE BUDGET

Clinton should move now to settle the budget bargain

It may lack the street activity of Paris but the other budget crisis in Washington deserves urgent attention too. For the past 15 years both the size of American public borrowing, and the means by which it has been financed, have been profoundly unstable for the global economy as well as the United States itself. The chief obstacle to a settlement has been political will. The events of the next week will indicate how much political will exists and who has it.

Throughout this year the Republican majority in Congress has sought a balanced budget within seven years. To this end it has taken some very tough decisions on domestic spending and entitlement programmes, and cushioned those with more popular items such as its proposed \$245 billion tax cut. The radicalism and complexity of this task have forced deliberations beyond the legal starting date — October 1 — of the US fiscal year. Since then the federal Government has been running on interim funding measures, with the exception of a six-day shutdown, the longest ever, at Thanksgiving.

The Government went back to work then through an agreement by both sides to produce a balanced budget over the seven-year timetable, on economic projections determined chiefly by the Congressional Budget Office. Since then Republicans have passed their package, which was vetoed by the President on the grounds that its tax cuts were too large and the reductions in spending growth for Government-run health programmes — Medicare and Medicaid — too harsh.

Congress then asked the White House to produce a plan that met the agreed criteria. This the President largely ducked. His seven-year scheme of last week was based on economic projections from his own Office of Management and Budget that were farcically optimistic. Nor did he budge from his opening offer of reductions in entitlement programmes. Republicans have accused him of reneging on his promise.

If matters continue this way then the short-term funding agreed last month will expire at a minute past midnight on Saturday morning and much of the American Government will come to a standstill again. Republican leaders have indicated that they will extend present spending arrangements for another week if they believe the President will now seriously negotiate. They have hinted a willingness to trade part of their tax cut proposal for a softening of expenditure decisions in areas the White House wants protected. Updated economic projections by the Congressional Budget Office, while far short of the numbers from the White House economists, have reduced the gap between the two sides by more than \$100 billion. The outlines of an outcome are evident. Republicans must concede part of their tax proposals and the Administration the need for greater discipline on health spending. Then a welcome move to fiscal responsibility can be delivered before Christmas.

To get there requires a move from the President. Mr Clinton has made much politically out of the process so far, and has been rewarded in public polls. He has endorsed the objective of a balanced budget and the timetable that Congress supports. Yet at the same time he has condemned the decisions essential to meeting that target. In particular he has mounted a populist defence of the very Medicare and Medicaid programmes whose career costs, some three times inflation, have done most to deepen deficits in recent years. In the next few days the President can indicate whether he intends to honour his commitment and pursue the possible compromise. Some of his advisers are urging him to withdraw from deliberations and have parts of the federal Government either close down or run on ad hoc measures from now until November 1996. Such a course would be calamitous for the reputation of the United States. The President should bargain now.

LOST DAYLIGHT

The Butterfill bill needs proper time for debate

The Cabinet's decision to try to sabotage John Butterfill's Private Member's Bill on daylight-saving time is another sad instance of the weak will and shortsightedness which has brought John Major's Government to its present sorry pass. Whatever one thinks of the arguments about shifting an hour of daylight to the afternoons from the mornings, this is an issue of substantial public interest, perfect for a non-partisan decision in a Private Member's Bill. By refusing MPs the time to deal with this issue, the Government will not only be putting the sectional interests of a tiny minority of Scottish farmers against the clearly expressed views of a large majority of the British public. It will also be making a mockery of the parliamentary procedure, which should have allowed Mr Butterfill, who came top of the Private Members' ballot, a genuine free vote.

According to the best available evidence, an hour of extra light in the afternoons, at the expense of darker mornings, would result in 700 fewer road deaths and serious injuries each year. Children would benefit proportionately more than adults because 80 per cent of injuries to children occur when they are making leisure trips unconnected with school journeys — and these leisure trips are in the evenings and afternoons. The elderly would also be big gainers because many are afraid of going out after dark. Crime would also fall because burglaries and muggings are far more common

in the evenings than before dawn. The business community strongly supports a time change because it would facilitate dealings with Europe and the Far East.

Against all these clear beneficiaries, there allegedly stand groups of farmers and Scots. Their supposed opposition is by no means clear. Opinion polls in Scotland have consistently shown majorities in favour of daylight savings, albeit smaller majorities than in England and Wales. Scotland would gain economically even more than England, since the very early sunsets there cause greater losses in the proportionately more important tourist trade. The assumed opposition of farmers is also unproven. Farmers can be more flexible about the time they start their jobs than office or factory workers. They can therefore more readily adapt their schedules to the daylight hours.

Whether or not the arguments for change are accepted, this is an issue that directly affects the life of every citizen of Britain, an issue on which the public needs more information and one on which there is room for reasonable people to settle disagreements through rational debate. In short, it is an ideal issue for a free vote on a Private Member's Bill after a full debate. Yet the Government seems determined to stop this because it fears the response of a few thousand Scottish farmers whom it has not taken the trouble to consult — and who will probably vote against the Tories anyway.

'Single currency' 'not a pipe dream'

From Mrs Edwina Currie, MP for South Derbyshire (Conservative)

Sir, As a good Tory I believe in the virtues of sound finance and a strong currency. It is all the more disappointing, therefore, to read such as John Redwood ("We deserve better from France", December 12) sneering at the French in their current difficulties, and disparaging the proposed European single currency.

The Gaullist administration in Paris deserves our full support. After years of running their affairs on subsidies and deficits, their determination to meet the Maastricht convergence criteria has at last put economic reality on to their agenda.

Under the Maastricht rules a government can still spend what it likes and tax as much or as little as it wishes. What it cannot do is run up huge deficits, to be financed by printing money. This restriction seems to me wholly beneficial. One can, however, understand why British politicians, with their long-standing penchant for inflation, should be worried.

As for the single currency, its main effect will be to stop governments flinching with their exchange rate. Since the war we British have seen the value of our currency go steadily but one way — downwards. Governments of all parties have used devaluation as an instrument of policy. The Conservatives do it marginally more slowly. Since 1979 sterling's value has fallen by half from over 4 DM to the pound, whereas in the previous 16 years it fell by two thirds: hardly a record to be proud of.

Such policies beggar our people and devalue their hard work. The impact on our standing in the world — let alone the persistently high interest rates our businesses face — is wholly negative.

The single currency cannot be dismissed as a pipe dream. Ten countries are still members of the exchange rate mechanism — a majority of our partners. The main problem will not be whether enough countries are able and willing to join, but whether, in the last resort, the stronger nations such as Germany will be willing to take the weaker ones such as Britain on board.

Yours sincerely,
EDWINA CURRIE
(Chairman,
The Conservative group for Europe,
House of Commons,
December 13.

From Mr Hugh Dykes, MP for Harrow East (Conservative), and others

Sir, We wish the Prime Minister and his colleagues all success in achieving the maximum returns for Britain's true interests at the EU summit in Madrid. We believe that these interests coincide with the whole Union's principal interests, as they unfold with the Maastricht treaty sequel and the inter-governmental conference next year.

Most patriotic citizens perceive that we do not need to stand aloof from these events. This country can surely best flourish when working very closely with our friends and allies in the EU.

Above all, we urge the Government to maintain a positive position in all the forthcoming plans for the single currency. The existing reserves position provides ample balance, if it is needed, to take the final decision in due course. In the meantime it is perfectly logical, within this framework, to pursue the eventual goal of the Euro-currency system, as Britain has so far done in the working groups.

Much time has been lost because the Government has all too often avoided putting over the powerful case for EMU to the public, which remains understandably apprehensive. Instead we need now to launch a full national discussion with courage and enthusiasm.

Yours etc,

HUGH DYKES,

ROBERT HICKS,

DAVID KNOX,

JIM LESTER,

TIM RATHBONE

House of Commons,
December 14.

From Mr J. O. Armstrong

Sir, It is farcical for John Redwood to write that we cannot adopt the single currency because all the shop tills and vending machines would have to be modified: proof at last that the British really are, as Napoleon called us, a nation of shopkeepers.

Yours faithfully,

J. O. ARMSTRONG,

Thomas de Pype's Mill,

Stonleigh,

Nr Coventry, Warwickshire,
December 13.

Access to the law

From Mr James Turner

Sir, If the assertion of copyright in statutory material means that the law is not freely available to all (letters, December 6, 8, 13), is there any justification for continued application of the principle that ignorance of the law is no defence?

Yours faithfully,

JAMES TURNER,

1 King's Bench Walk,

Temple, EC4,
December 13.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9NN Telephone 0171-782 5000

The lessons to be learnt from a headteacher's murder

From Mr Walter Cairns

Sir, I have no quarrel with William Rees-Mogg ("The headmaster's lesson for us all", December 11) when he decries the kind of moral relativism which fails to distinguish right from wrong, particularly in the case of the sad death of Philip Lawrence (letters, December 11, 12).

No amount of social deprivation can justify or excuse crimes of such violence. However, the question to which we must now address ourselves is how we prevent such tragedies from recurring. On this issue, I suspect, Lord Rees-Mogg and I would part company.

It is one thing to excuse crime on the basis of social and economic circumstances, quite another to examine dispassionately the conditions in which this type of evil flourishes and take appropriate action. Prevention is always better than cure and need not sacrifice any intrinsic moral values. The links between crime and the social ills of poverty and unemployment have been too well documented, and confirmed by too many chief constables, to be ignored by our policy-makers.

The plain fact is that the vast majority of people who are provided with satisfactory employment, decent housing and a clean environment have too much to lose by turning to crime. In those inner-city areas where only a small minority have access to all these facilities, a life of crime will always appear more attractive to a minority of their inhabitants.

Until this lesson is learnt I very much fear there will be more tragedies such as the one which shocked the nation last week.

Yours sincerely,
WALTER CAIRNS,
Broomhurst Hall,
836 Wilmslow Road, Manchester 20,
December 11.

From Mr Geoffrey Noël

Sir, Hardly any measures exist to deter criminals from carrying and using knives. In June I wrote to the Home Secretary expressing concern. I pointed out that the majority who are charged with possessing an offensive weapon elect jury trial and that convictions are few.

A charge, under Section 139 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, of unjustifiably carrying a knife with a blade ex-

ceeding 3in carries only a fine or less.

A solution is to make the charge of carrying offensive weapons triable only in a magistrates' court and to enlarge Section 139 to include imprisonment. This would not necessarily mean a surge in the prison population; it would be enough that the threat existed.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFFREY NOËL,
(Metropolitan stipendiary
magistrate, 1975-93),
c/o 1 Garden Court, Temple, EC4,
December 12.

From Mrs Joan Woods

Sir, On December 11 you reported that "teachers' leaders will today meet Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, to discuss school discipline, and David Hart of the National Association of Head Teachers said yesterday that teachers might have to think twice about 'playing the hero'".

I find this remark singularly inappropriate from someone in Mr Hart's position, particularly in relation to a teacher so dedicated that he did not stop "to think twice" before risking, and losing, his life to save a pupil from a murderer. Nor was he "playing".

The bravery of Philip Lawrence, the reaction of his wife and family and of the pupils of St George's School, have inspired and humbled all except, apparently, Mr Hart. He has made it an occasion for a cheap remark which does little credit to the hierarchy of a profession which Philip Lawrence and his family have raised to unaccustomed levels of respect.

Yours sincerely,
JOAN WOODS,
8 East Street, Lewes, East Sussex,
December 13.

From Mr Nigel Gee

Sir, I have for some years been a member, in a voluntary capacity, of the Executive Committee of World ORT (the Organisation for Rehabilitation through Training) which, as the world's largest independent vocational training organisation, gives a more secure future every year to 250,000 young people around the world through training programmes.

I believe the Government should demonstrate its responsibility to the future of young people in this country by guaranteeing that every person un-

der 22 years of age is in full employment, full-time education or full-time vocational training. Any group of young people roaming the streets could then justifiably be questioned and returned to their proper place of work.

The cost of instilling motivation and a sense of responsibility to new generations of young people is far cheaper than paying the current price of crime, unemployment and lives of desolation.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL GEE,
48 Pont Street, SW1,
December 13.

From the Master of the Armourers & Brasiers' Company

Sir, Increasing numbers of serious knife attacks on individuals are exposing to particular danger police officers, prison wardens, ambulance drivers and schoolteachers. Unfortunately, government funds for research into protective clothing are strictly limited, and what money is available is largely being donated to research into protection against bullets.

Knife attack requires different forms of protective clothing and, in order to get research under way, our company has agreed to provide the "missing" money to fund a three-year programme at Cranfield University. We hope the result will be a new jacket which will give a high level of protection from attack whilst still being comfortable to wear.

Yours faithfully,
G. C. HONNYWILL,
Master,
Armourers & Brasiers' Company,
Armourers' Hall,
81 Coleman Street, EC2.

From Canon Basil Jones

Sir, I hope that the tragic death of the headmaster of a Kilburn school will mean that every youth club and young people's organisation will have a waiting list of suitable adults of every class and race ready to be prepared for leadership.

The need is now and it is urgent.
Yours faithfully,
BASIL JONES,
17 Lochness Road, Northchurch,
Berks/Herts, Bedfordshire,
December 11.

Sport on TV

From Mr Tim de Ferrars

Sir, Now that the BBC has been relieved of the cost of covering Formula One motor racing (report, December 14) in addition to the FA Cup Final, various Test cricket competitions, etc, will I see a reduction in my licence fee?

Yours sincerely,
TIM DE FERRARS,
18 Mount Pleasant Road,
Caterham, Surrey,
December 14.

A loser's victory

From Captain Omar Malik

Sir, Might not some form of award be initiated for those who set a national example in polite behaviour?

I have in mind the captain of the Oxford University rugby team, Tyrone Howe. He was seen yesterday, having suffered a last-minute defeat, warmly shaking the hands of the Cambridge team and congratulating them with a smile. What a marvellous example to millions of television viewers.

In the opinion of a partisan Cambridge supporter, the victory yesterday was not to Cambridge but to sportsmanship. Well done, Oxford's captain.

Yours politely,

OMAR MALIK,

Royal Air Force Club,

128 Piccadilly, W1,
December 13.

Sports letters, page 36

Bird trained

From Mrs Ruth Wadley

Sir, The brain specialisation scientists have identified in chickens (report, September 9; letter, December 12) is surely no more than the selective hearing in humans which, as all wives and mothers know, enables men to hear the sports commentary perfectly in one ear but be completely deaf in the other.

Yours etc,
RUTH WADLEY,
Wood Bar Cottage,
Cliffords Mease,
Newent, Gloucestershire.

Caring by numbers

From Mr J. A. E. Gorst

Sir, I have never felt so cherished as I did this morning when I received from my motor insurers a letter which contained the following sentence:

"As part of our switch over to a more personal level of service, your policy number has changed from MC-9212/131-8 to DU06X143113".

Yours faithfully,
J. A. E. GORST,
Marsh Court Farm,
Stockbridge, Hampshire,
December 8.

Assessing risks of BSE

From Dr J. B. Timmis and Mrs S. P. Timmis

Sir, We are sure that by now most people are aware that CJD is an extremely rare disease; and it was reassuring to read Professor A. R. Michell's letter (December 11) confirming this. However, with such a long incubation period, we cannot possibly be certain that this low mortality rate will remain constant.

If, in 30-40 years' time, CJD were to become as common a cause of death as Alzheimer's (or even falling out of bed), and if it were to be shown in the future that there was indeed a link between BSE and CJD, our grandchildren would surely wonder why more wasn't done to protect them when our suspicions were first aroused in the Eighties.

If on the other hand the incidence of CJD remains steady, and a link is not established, perhaps they will look kindly upon us for being sensible enough to take precautions on their behalf at a time when the answers were not fully known.

Yours sincerely,
J. B. TIMMIS,
S. TIMMIS,
12 Ringwood Avenue, N2,
December 11.

From Dr R. N. W. Ellis

Sir, As a veterinarian I fully support Professor Michell's views. The usual government spokespersons seem not to have noticed that the odds of a million to one have altered in the public's perception to being more likely to happen, on the spurious grounds that at least one winner at even greater odds turns up every Saturday. It appears therefore to happen frequently.

As any fule kno who has held on to Premium Bonds for yonks without a winner, it is still one hell of a long shot at odds of over a million to one.

So I still eat beef.

Yours faithfully,

R. N. W. ELLIS,

The Old Vicarage, Beulah,

Llanwrtyd Wells, Powys.

Greenpeace costs

From the Executive Director of Greenpeace UK

Sir, In a report on December 7 ("Protesters reluctant to tap into reserves") you allege that Greenpeace "has recently become the focus of public criticism" about what you describe as a "lavish" annual general meeting in Tunisia. This "criticism" has only been voiced once since the AGM in Tunisia — which in fact took place in November 1994 — by journalists writing in *The Sunday Times* on October 22.

The 1994 AGM was not lavish. It was held in Tunisia to mark the opening of the first Greenpeace office in Africa, to allow Greenpeace staff from all over the world to learn more about the conditions in which our newest office was operating; and as it was held out of season its cost was a good deal

less than if it had been held in areas such as northern Europe.

The same report suggested that Greenpeace was unwilling to invest international reserves to renew our fleet. Wrong again. We are currently refitting a new, ice-capable ship for our own use, at a cost of \$2.8 million.

Yours sincerely,

PETER MELCHETT,

Executive Director,

Greenpeace UK,

Canonbury Villas, N1,
December 11.

Business letters, page 25

Letters for publication should carry

contact telephone numbers. We

regret that we cannot accept

letters by telephone but they

may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5046.

OBITUARIES

EVANGELINE BRUCE

Evangeline Bruce, widow of David Bruce and author of *Napoleon and Josephine*, died on December 13 aged 81. She was born on November 27, 1914.

EVANGELINE BRUCE was a woman of elusive beauty and style who lived a life of gleaming success and elegance, interspersed with occasional dark pools of tragedy. For nearly a decade she was London's outstanding ambassador, having previously performed the same role in Paris and in Bonn. Then, for a quarter of a century and from her fine rambling Georgetown house, she was as much the queen of Washington as had been other more ostentatious ladies of previous eras. She reigned, however, by understatement rather than flamboyance.

In the spring of this year she added a large and unusual jewel to the crown by producing at the age of 80 as her only published work a considerable, acclaimed and scholarly study of the marriage of Napoleon and Josephine and of the surrounding scene in revolutionary and imperial France. She had been secretly working on the book for years, and its success would certainly have encouraged her to continue research and writing in this vein.

This was not to be. From the height of this success she plunged into the deepest and most literal of the black pools. Two mornings after the launch of the book she woke up blind and never regained her sight beyond a slight flickering of light and shade.

Another deep and dark pool was the murder, in 1976, of her only daughter (there were two sons) Sasha Bruce, at a family house in the Shenandoah Valley. The blow was

not made lighter by the primary suspect being the daughter's recently acquired husband. He was indicted but, having returned to his native Greece, was not extradited. Evangeline Bruce's life, therefore, had plenty of shade to balance the brightness of the light. The courage with which she faced these vicissitudes belied the gossamer side to her appearance and personality.

Evangeline Bell (as she was before her marriage) was one of the two daughters of an American diplomat, Edward Bell, and an English mother. The other daughter, now Virginia Surtees, the author of several notable studies of English 19th-century figures, was at one time married to Sir Ashley Clarke, then British Ambassador in Rome. Both girls were brought up in an international and diplomatic milieu. "Vangie", as she mostly came to be called, spoke English with hardly a trace of an American accent, although her soft low voice was sufficiently idiosyncratic to be instantly recognisable and not to fit into any "standard" category. She spoke French almost perfectly and possessed acceptable Italian.

She was educated at various European schools, did courses at Radcliffe College (now incorporated in Harvard) and then, in the latter part of the war, worked first in Washington and then in London, in the Office of Strategic Services. There she encountered, and indeed worked under, her future husband, David Bruce. They were married in 1945. Only a few years ago she was telephoned by an American magazine, which was running a somewhat portentous survey, and asked whether she was ever subject to sexual harassment during her



brief working career. Her reply was a good example of her liking for a mordant tease. "Yes, a lot," she said, getting her interlocutor very excited. "Could you tell us by whom?" was the next tremulous question. "Certainly," she answered to deep disappointment at the other end, "almost entirely by Colonel Bruce."

David K. E. Bruce was very much a Virginian gentleman who had been

at Princeton, had been on the fringe of Democratic politics in both Virginia and Maryland between the wars and had married fairly young the immensely rich Ailsa Mellon. They had parted during the war. Although not a career Foreign Service officer, he began his glittering and professional Diplomatic Service soon after the Second World War. He was at different times in the late 1940s and

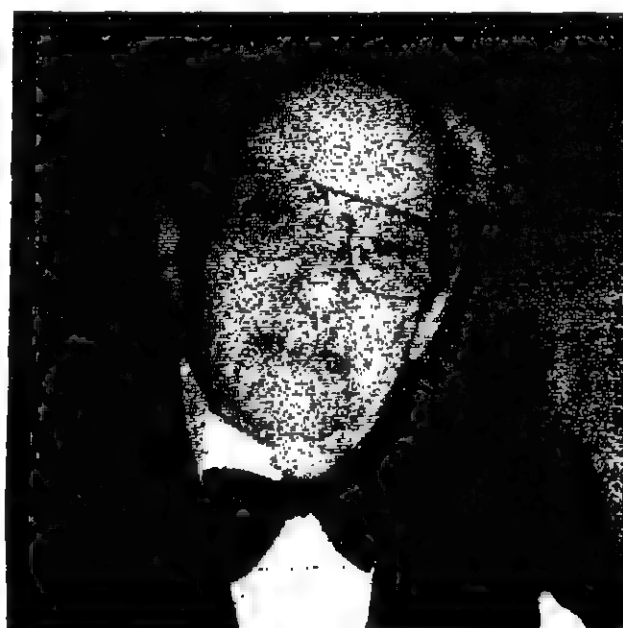
ERIC GLASS

Eric Glass, literary and theatrical agent, died in London on December 4 aged 88. He was born in Vienna on February 16, 1907.

FOR almost sixty years Eric Glass presided over the careers of a wide variety of international writers, actors and directors from his spacious script-cluttered eyrie perched over a succession of nightclubs and restaurants at the top of Berkeley Square. His clients were British, continental and American, ranging at times from Richard Tauber and Sir Donald Wolfit to Edmund Purdon and Edward Woodward; from Arthur Schnitzler to Philip King and Falkland L. Cary; from Oscar Homolka to Roy Plomley.

His delight in approaching a deal, and his inventive sagacity in clinching it, were a byword in theatre and film circles. Nothing pleased him more than the watertight contract he achieved for Peter Cotes, the original director of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* in 1952. It proved impregnable when director and producer famously fell out soon after the opening. Cotes declined to be bought off with a lump sum; despite the blandishments of Richard Attenborough, the original star, who also had a continuing interest in the production. He receives his royalties to this day, 43 years on.

Eric Glass was born in Vienna and his accent was forever overlaid with a generous helping of *mittel* European cream. His father, Adolf Glass, was Austrian, but his mother, Annette, née



Goldschmidt, was English, a descendant of Baron Lyon de Symons and the eminent British philanthropist Sir Samuel Ellis, a founder of the Great Western Railway. Educated in Vienna, where he later attended university, the young Eric was a frequent visitor to England where he had many relatives. He had shown signs of being a musical prodigy, giving his first piano recital in his home city at the age of nine. Throughout his life his favourite composer remained Johann Strauss II, with whom his mother proudly claimed to have waited.

However, Glass soon showed more interest in writing and began a career as a journalist and theatre critic. On his London visits he acted as a correspondent for various Austrian newspapers.

He moved permanently to London in the early 1930s and established his agency in 1934. Its initial premises were in Piccadilly House. Among his many early schemes was the importation and promotion of musicals involving colleagues encountered during his Viennese days. Richard Tauber appeared as Schubert in *Blossom Time* and as Sou Chong, his famous role in *The Land of Smiles*.

In 1942 Old Chelsea was "a musical romance" in which, in a manner akin to the modern concept of "packaging", Glass represented Walter Ellis (author of the comedy *A Little Bit of Fluff*) on whose book it was based. Richard Tauber, the star and composer, and Bernard Green, who provided additional lighter numbers. Tauber and Glass insisted on

casting the young Carol Lynne as the little milliner, who brings the play to a happy ending, against the determined opposition of the impresario Bernard Delfont whose first production it was. Eventually Delfont gave in and later he married Miss Lynne.

Glass also had a hand in wartime and postwar revivals of *White Horse Inn* and *Summer Song*. In 1942 he married Blanche Clarke and for many years they presided over the business from two massive desks which sat side by side in the impressive main room of the Berkeley Square offices, both desks always swamped in letters, contracts and manuscripts.

As well as administering the affairs of his long and varied list of clients, Glass translated a great number of plays into German. Those enjoying major productions included texts by John Drinkwater, Walter Ellis, Jerome K. Jerome, Anthony Armstrong, Roland Pertwee and St John Ervine. Many of his translations are still performed in Europe.

The firm's client list expanded dramatically when Glass found himself appointed representative for the English speaking countries of the *Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques*.

This brought under his aegis the estates or the ongoing work of many European authors including Albert Camus, Georges Feydeau, André Gide, Sacha Guitry and Jean Paul Sartre. A colleague once congratulated the agent on representing the best list of dead authors he had ever come across. His better-known English clients over

the years included Rodney Ackland, for whose survival he fought during Ackland's unfashionable years. Patrick Cargill, Vivian Ellis, William Douglas-Horne, Noel Langley, Eric Maschwitz and Wolf Mankowitz.

One of Glass's longest struggles for a play was over the enduring hit *Seagulls Over Sorrento*. When he received it from the author Hugh Hastings, he followed his usual custom of giving it to four readers. With four diverse reports, as in this case, it was his practice to return any MS. However, Blanche Glass picked it up by mistake, thinking it was still under consideration, and read it through the night. Told that it was a reject she protested that it had something "compelling". Her husband read it. He agreed with her and sent it to the leading West End producer, Hugh ("Binkie") Beaumont, who hated it, its all-male cast and its working-class characters.

For two years Glass tried to arrange a production, submitting it to every other manager, touring company and rep. As with the much earlier army play *Journeys End*, it eventually saw the stage (of the Comedy Theatre) in one Sunday performance for the Repertory Players. Kitty Black, monitoring it for Beaumont, immediately insisted

that he buy it in spite of stiff opposition from the fledgling management of George and Alfred Black. On visiting the agent's offices, Beaumont was reminded of his earlier rejection and Glass achieved a fine contract for his author. Beaumont presented the play with the Blacks. It ran for 1,551 performances.

Glass showed similar faith in the early work of the young dramatist Charles Dyer (*Rattle of a Simple Man* and *The Staircase*) and looked after the director John Dexter's affairs in the 1960s.

He continued to run his agency with an intriguingly personal touch; yet his business acumen always stayed sharp under his avuncular manner. He and Blanche fought fiercely and imaginatively for their clients and had an endearing way of referring to them. Of Sir Donald Wolfit, for example, they would say proudly: "Ah yes, Donald, he's one of our darlings!"

Blanche Glass died in 1980. In August 1983 Eric married Janet Crowley who joined him in running and expanding the business during the 1980s and 1990s, and cared for him devotedly during his prolonged, painful and complicated illness.

She survives him, as do his daughter and son from his first marriage.

JOHN GILLETT

John Gillett, MBE, film critic and historian, died on December 8 aged 70. He was born on September 28, 1925.



JOHN GILLETT was for forty years one of the best-known figures on the international film festival circuit. His most notable contribution to film culture was his work in introducing to European audiences the long-hidden historic treasures of Japanese cinema. Last year the Japanese Government acknowledged this achievement by decorating him with the Order of the Sacred Treasure, with Gold Rays and Rosette—an honour rarely given to foreigners. The same month, more modestly, he was appointed MBE.

John Percy Gillett was born in Ealing. After school he took a secretarial course and then worked for the local paper, hoping to fulfil his first ambition to become a music critic. His passion for films was already strong, however, and he moved on to work as information officer at the British Film Academy, a small organisation devised by the pioneer film historian Roger Manvell, which was eventually to grow into the present BFI.

In 1952 Gillett joined the British Film Institute as information officer. "I found I was surrounded by information about films which I had never seen," he recalled. "So from that time I made a commitment to search out as many of these films as I could, and to present them to audiences wherever I was able." The rest of his working life was to be spent at the BFI, latterly as researcher and programme adviser to the National Film Theatre and the London Film Festival.

The first major season he organised for the National Film Theatre, in 1967, was devoted to Buster Keaton, until then quite forgotten. Other great directors of silent cinema resurged in Gillett seasons included Ernst Lubitsch, William C. de Mille, Frank Borzage, Robert Siodmak and the Russian film-maker and pugilist Boris Barnet.

The 1957 National Film Theatre season "A Light in the Japanese Window", devised by Derek Prouse and Kashiko Kawakita, proved a revelation for him. With a grant from the Japan Foundation, Gillett went to Tokyo for marathon viewings of the holdings of the film archives there. This enabled him, in time, to pass on his discoveries to London audiences, until then aware of Japan only through the films of Akira Kurosawa.

Gillett was to reveal the marvels of older Japanese masters — Mizoguchi, Ozu, Kinoshita, Goshu, Naruse, Shimizu, Kobayashi, Imai, Toyoda. Unexpectedly these seemingly esoteric presentations proved far better box office than the NFT's more calculatedly commercial seasons. Throughout the 1980s

the National Film Theatre offered a new Japanese season every year; afterwards the programmes were packaged for tours to other world centres.

No small part of the success of these seasons was Gillett's persuasive proselytising. He wrote well, wisely and, above all, enthusiastically about films. His reviews and articles appeared regularly in *The Monthly Film Bulletin* and *Sight and Sound*, while he contributed reviews of film festivals to a variety of dailies and weeklies. With an impressive musical knowledge, he was notably perceptive about the use of music in films.

He shared his vast knowledge freely and generously. His skill, acquired in years of festival-going, for unravelling complex and overcrowded programmes, was a byword and other critics relied on the ingenious viewing schedules he would work out to ensure that no vital screening was missed.

Gillett was a man totally without malice, and incapable of seeing ill-will in others. He survived within the British Film Institute, innocently untouched by that organisation's internal politics and periodic upheavals.

Unfathomably polite, incorrigibly friendly, his disapproval was reserved for bad film-makers ("The man doesn't know where to put his camera") and inadequate film projection. He was, indeed, the terror of film projectionists throughout the world, appearing, courteous but firm, at their door the moment the focus was off or the sound too loud. The only time he had been known to put up with soft focus was at the Cannes Festival some years ago when the gendarme guarding the projection box door unbuttoned his holster and released the safety catch of his pistol as he loomed up.

His enthusiasm remained unquenchable, even though he had grown increasingly ill during the past year or so. In October he attended a favourite annual event, the Pordenone Festival of silent cinema. There, though barely able to walk, he was overjoyed to see a long-lost early film by, and starring, one of his idols, Ernst Lubitsch. This was to be the last film he saw; he went into hospital the next day. He remained unmarried.

AURIOL WATKIN

Auriol Watkin, OBE, university lecturer and magistrate, died on November 28 aged 77. She was born on March 3, 1918.

AURIOL WATKIN was one of the country's leading authorities on the treatment of young offenders. Despite the fact that she never had any children herself, she had the invaluable experience, for her work on the Bench, of her many years as a university lecturer at Aberystwyth.

It was as a senior magistrate on the Talyllyn (later the North Cardiganshire) Bench, 1955-83, that she was first drawn into the problems of delinquency, and she became chairman of the Magistrates' Association Juvenile Courts Committee, 1973-83. She had

progressive views about the causes of delinquency. Many of the children appearing before her, for instance, charged with shoplifting, assault and truancy, came from middle-class families. She blamed the surprisingly high rate of offending among these so-called good families, on parents either ignoring their children, or having unrealistically high academic expectations of them.

Her publications concentrated on truancy, of which she had experience from her days as a schoolteacher. Later, problem university students at Aberystwyth were often passed on to her, as one vice-chancellor put it, "to see if she could do something with them before they were asked to leave". She was proud of the fact that none of these "problems" had been failures. One

became an MP, another a British ambassador, and several later served in the United Nations. A Cabinet minister in the Far East, a film star and a conductor of a silver band had all been under her wing. Margaret Auriol Griffiths, as she was before marriage, was born in Tumble, Carmarthenshire, the daughter of a mining engineer. Criminal law ran in the family veins, as did the spirit of public service. Her cousin on the paternal side was Professor Glanville Williams of Cambridge, an authority on criminal law. On the maternal side, her great uncle was the philanthropist Sir Alfred Lewis Jones, founder of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. She was educated at a local school at Gwendraeth, which was particularly noted for

producing Welsh rugby internationalists. She then gained two degrees — in economics and political science, and in geography — at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, before training as a teacher. She became vice-president of the students' union at Aberystwyth — women being at that time debarred from the presidency. Appointments followed at schools in Neath and Cardiff, and then lectureships in education at the university colleges at Swansea and Aberystwyth. She was chairman of the Talyllyn Bench four times. On retirement in 1988 she was made vice-president of the Magistrates' Association. She was appointed OBE in 1985.

She is survived by her husband, Dr Iestyn Watkin, registered in an assumed name and was understood to have come from Cape Colony. There was nothing unusual in her appearance or manner. She took her place among the other guests, and it is stated read the newspapers daily. Last evening someone in the Hydro noticed that there was a resemblance between her and a photograph of Mrs. Christie which has been published.

ON THIS DAY

December 15, 1926

One of the early detective novels by Agatha Christie is entitled *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*. Her disappearance in 1926 was an equally mysterious affair.

know who she is," he said. "We are hoping to take her to London to-morrow to see specialists, and that after rest and quiet, she will be fully restored." Colonel Christie thanked the Press and also the police for their untiring efforts to trace his wife.

Mrs. Christie arrived at the Hydro on the night of Saturday, December 4, the day following her disappearance. She had with her only an attaché case. She

registered in an assumed name and was understood to have come from Cape Colony.

There was nothing unusual in her appearance or manner. She took her place among the other guests, and it is stated read the newspapers daily. Last evening someone in the Hydro noticed that there was a resemblance between her and a photograph of Mrs. Christie which has been published.

The police were informed, and Superintendent MacDowell and other officers visited the Hydro, and following their observations, the Surrey police were communicated with.

It will be recalled that after the disappearance of Mrs. Christie a letter was received from her by a brother of Colonel Christie, living at Woolwich, stating that she was in ill-health and was going to a Yorkshire spa.

The Surrey police communicated with certain centres in Yorkshire and satisfied themselves, it was understood, that she was not then in that county.

PERSONAL COLUMN

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Recovery is under threat warns CBI

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BUSINESS leaders issued a warning today that the recovery in manufacturing could "run out of steam" as the new year starts with a predicted slowdown in output growth.

Although the findings of the monthly trends survey from the Confederation of British Industry were drawn from companies before this week's quarter point cut in interest rates, business leaders believe that the cut was so small as to make little if any difference to manufacturers' views.

In a survey covering more than 1,000 manufacturing companies accounting for about half of the UK's manufactured exports, companies are predicting a further significant slowdown over the next month.

While 27 per cent of the companies surveyed expect output to increase during the next four months, 25 per cent say it is likely to decline. This positive balance of 2 per cent is well below the figure for November, when it stood at 9 per cent, and confirms that output expectations are now much less positive.

The 2 per cent balance is the lowest figure for output expectations since the beginning of 1993 and comes after a further weakening in demand this month. A balance of -10 per cent of companies surveyed say their total order books are

below normal, continuing a slight but steady downward trend of -9 and -8 per cent in the previous months.

Exports are also continuing to wane, with overseas demand now much less buoyant than earlier in the year. A balance of -3 per cent of companies say their export order books are below normal. This is worse than the -1 per cent for the previous month, and marks the third consecutive month in which manufacturers have reported export demand to be below normal.

Further signs of weakening demand come in companies' stock levels which continue to be more than adequate to meet expected demand, with the balance of companies reporting this up from 18 to 22 per cent.

CBI leaders said that their full quarterly trends survey next month would allow business to assess fully the impact of the cut in interest rates. But voicing the warning stating that the UK might now be "on the threshold of an output standstill", the CBI did not play down the gloomy impact of its latest study of industry. Sudhir Junankar, CBI associate economic analysis director, says that the survey's results "show that the manufacturing recovery could run out of steam as we enter the new year".



United front: Michael Kersey, left, chief executive of London Electricity, and Sir Bob Reid, the chairman.

London ready to resist power bid

By Christine Buckley

LONDON ELECTRICITY, which has yet to be bid for, insisted yesterday that it could remain viable as an independent company after the opening up of the energy market to full competition.

It denied that plans for a special dividend were designed to fend off a potential bid. The 100p-a-share payment, which will drain £200 million from the company's balance sheet, will take

London's gearing to 60 per cent in the short term, although that will quickly fall to 50 per cent after one-off tax benefits. Such a level would enable the company to make further payments, although it says it is committed to pursuing other developments.

London, which has a joint services agreement with Thames Water, is preparing for the test scheme to sell gas for domestic customers in an

open market, which starts in the South West next spring. It has joined with Total to form London Total Energy for the experiment, in which suppliers are expected to fight for customers.

The company is also waiting for power to start feeding through from Barking power station, which began operating in October. London has a £12 million equity stake in the power station, along with

Eastern and Southern as part of the consortium that built it.

London, which reported an upturn in demand largely from commercial customers, raised pre-tax profits for the six months to September 30 to £84.5 million (£42.8 million), although last year's figures were hit by a £33 million restructuring charge.

The interim dividend, due on January 26, will increase 21 per cent to 11.5p.

Three in final bid for plants

HYDRO-ELECTRIC, the Scottish electricity company, makes a final bid on Monday for the hydro plants hived off from the National Grid (Christine Buckley writes). It is competing with two American companies — Mission and Dominion — for the pumped storage businesses in Wales.

Eleven companies were in the first round of bidding. Hydro-Electric and one of the US companies each offered about £450 million. The other US company bid more than £600 million.

Roger Young, chief executive, said yesterday: "We will bid what we can afford and the business would fit in very well, but it would be in nobody's interests to overstep our limit."

Pre-tax profits at Hydro-Electric in the six months to September 30 climbed to £61.7 million from £34.9 million a year ago, which included the repayment of £18.8 million debt. The interim dividend, payable March 20, is raised 9.4 per cent to 4.75p.

Tempos, page 24

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.18	1.99
Austria Sch	16.70	15.25
Belgium Fr	48.67	44.57
Canada \$	2.220	2.060
Cyprus Cyp£	0.750	0.685
Denmark Kr	6.58	6.46
Finland Mk	7.25	6.90
France Fr	8.10	7.45
Germany Dm	2.29	2.18
Greece Dr	388.00	364.00
Hong Kong \$	12.82	11.52
Ireland Ir£	1.02	0.94
Israel Sh	5.1800	4.9900
Italy Lit	2556.00	2403.00
Japan Yen	170.50	154.50
Malta	0.582	0.537
Netherlands Gld	2.851	2.621
New Zealand \$	2.50	2.28
Norway Kr	10.43	9.63
Portugal Esc	246.50	227.00
Spain Ptas	166.50	153.50
Sweden Kr	10.82	10.12
Switzerland Fr	1.94	1.78
Turkey Lira	1.00	899.50
USA \$	1.633	1.503

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Southern Water to launch buy-back

SHARES in Southern Water rose 11p to 669p after the company announced it was launching a buy-back. Southern said it will buy 9.7 per cent of shares at the current trading price before the end of March. The company also unveiled an 18 per cent rise in half-year profits to £84 million and an increased interim dividend of 9.8p, up 16 per cent. Group turnover was up 9 per cent to £207 million, while costs in the regulated business fell 2 per cent. Turnover in the non-regulated division increased 23 per cent to £26.2 million while profits were flat at £5.5 million.

Southern said it is launching an action plan to improve supplies and develop new reservoir capacity. The company will also spend an extra £50 million on improving customer service and has chosen to defer 1 per cent of the allowable price increase for water bills next year. The dividend is due on April 9 and Southern said it would increase the value of the final dividend to preserve its value following the buy-back.

Fisher chief under fire

STEPHEN WALLS, chairman of Albert Fisher, faced criticism from small shareholders at the annual meeting of the company yesterday. Concern centred on the increase in pay packages for executives of the food group despite a fall in earnings per share and pre-tax profit over the past year. Pre-tax profits fell 10.6 per cent to £31.1 million in the year to August, and earnings per share fell to 2.9p (3.3p). Mr Walls, however, received a 6.6 per cent pay rise to £388,000, including a bonus of £60,000 and an increased pensions contribution of £154,500. Lenny Pippin, chief executive (North America), received a 57 per cent pay rise to £396,000.

CINMan dispute brews

A dispute is expected to erupt today between trustees of the £17 billion coalminers' pension funds and British Coal at a meeting to finalise a buyer for CINMan, the company that looks after the two pension schemes on which more than 550,000 miners and staff have a claim. British Coal, which is in the process of selling its business operations, is understood to want to sell to Friends Provident, the British fund management group. Friends is believed to have bid twice as much for the two funds, the British Coal staff scheme and the Mineworkers Pension Scheme, as Sal Oppenheim, a German company. But trustees say Sal is more suitable.

Nadir ruling reserved

JUDGMENT was reserved in the House of Lords in an appeal concerning £650,000 of bail funds lodged by an associate of Asil Nadir, head of the Polly Peck group. The Master of the Rolls in the Court of Appeal shared the view of the Divisional Court and the trial judge that Ramadan Guney should forfeit £650,000 of the sum he put up for Mr Nadir, who jumped bail of £3.5 million and fled to northern Cyprus. The two other judges in the Court of Appeal decided that Mr Guney should not have to pay, because Mr Nadir had technically surrendered to custody in June 1992. Appeal was granted to the House of Lords, which considered the matter yesterday. A ruling is expected after Christmas.

Germans cool on EMU

GERMANS remain very sceptical about a single European currency, but many warm to the idea if Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain are left out of it, according to an Infas opinion poll for WDR television. It showed 45 per cent of Germans surveyed were against the European Union's planned economic and monetary union and 23 per cent for it. If only a few EU countries were to take part in a currency, 79 per cent of Germans thought their country should join it and only 13 per cent said Bonn should still reject it. "German views about the European monetary union are much more differentiated than originally thought," WDR said.

Record for Big Mac

MCDONALD'S, the fast-food group operating in 89 countries, will end 1995 with record international growth, having opened 1,300 restaurants outside the United States, generating 60,000 new jobs. In 1994, McDonald's opened 751 non-US outlets. Jim Cantalupo, president and chief executive of McDonald's International, said: "This year, 20 per cent of our restaurant openings were in countries we were not even in five years ago." The company added 10 countries in 1995, including Qatar, Honduras and St. Maarten this week. The others are Estonia, Romania, Malta, Colombia, Jamaica, Slovakia and South Africa.

Car sales accelerate

WESTERN European car sales rose 3.6 per cent in November from last year, buoyed by higher sales in Germany, Britain and Italy, according to figures released by the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA). Provisional data showed western European new car sales totalled 953,300 in November. New car sales fell 9.3 per cent in France and 5.8 per cent in Spain. Portugal showed the biggest monthly drop — 24.5 per cent — while Finland jumped 31 per cent. Sales rose 6.9 per cent in Germany, 12.8 per cent in Britain and 12.5 per cent in Italy.

US unsold goods leap

STOCKS of unsold goods held by American businesses reported the largest increase in half a year in October, while sales fell, marking the 19th straight monthly rise in business inventories, the American Government said. Total business inventories rose 0.6 per cent in October to a seasonally adjusted \$79.56 billion after a 0.5 per cent increase in September, the Commerce Department said. The continued pile-up in unsold goods came as businesses saw sales fall 0.4 per cent in October to \$687.18 billion, the first drop since July. Sales rose a revised 0.3 per cent in September.

AMEC

Shareholder information update.

AMEC's response to Kvaerner's offers.

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□ MMC gives prizes to all □ Granada's £100m strategy for Forte □ Countdown to the Grid rebate

Playing the BT numbers game

□ PERFECT competition is, it seems, upon us. Not being able to keep your telephone number free of charge when you switch telephone companies was "the most significant impediment to competition in the UK telephone market", according to the rival cable companies. The Consumers' Association rates this seemingly minor inconvenience as "the main barrier to competition in the telecommunications industry". The market was evidently pretty open, even before yesterday's judgment from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Don Cruickshank, Director-General of Telecommunications, is too canny to fall for that one. BT's hard-done-by competitors may think they will have little else to complain about after yesterday's MMC ruling that BT should pay most of the costs of number portability, but the regulator is not about to do himself out of a job.

To Mr Cruickshank, the market will not be working well until BT has lost most of its business. Meanwhile, he must impose tough price controls on BT. These cuts are designed to protect consumers from the predations of BT's monopoly. In practice, however, they destroy any long-term

incentive the average customer might have to switch suppliers. Price controls stop competition spreading naturally.

Mr Cruickshank's short-term actions will, therefore, continue to undermine his long-term priority. In frustration, he will doubtless think up ever more far-fetched schemes to give slices of BT's business to competitors by means other than consumer choice in a genuine free market.

The MMC's report is doubly significant for the future course of this guerrilla war. First, it backs the "Austrian" economic approach that a monopolist should have to subsidise its competitors to take its business. That ideology assumes that BT's shareholders do not matter, because, in the Austrian world-view, there is no such thing as millions of ordinary people being sold natural monopoly utilities on the basis that as many citizens as possible should have a stake in such steady earners. The Austrians want to make sure the future is unsteady. They also

assume that the utility's on-going customers benefit more from subsidies given to customers of competitors than the cost of the subsidies, even if they have to pay them.

On that issue, the Director-General has won. On the other dispute over the rules of war, BT claims at least a temporary victory. The MMC set guidelines for sharing costs, rather than allowing Mr Cruickshank discretion to fix what he felt like. But the MMC ducked the principle, deciding merely on the issue at hand. The regulator, having nothing better to do, will doubtless renew his challenge.

Robinson slashes out

□ GRANADA'S riposte to Forte's defence document confirms weekend reports that Gerry Robinson and his merry men are confident they can hack £100 million worth of overheads out of the target company, presumably



without destroying it. The document, entitled *Creating More Value*, bluntly declares that Forte's ongoing profits "can be improved by over £100 million per annum". The weekend reports that disclosed the £100 million strategy, also predicted where the axes would fall. Speculation had it that some £25 million to £30 million would be cut from Forte's payroll, while the purchasing budget would be reduced by up to £45 million. Central costs — embracing "layers of management" — would be slashed by £35 million. Granada's camp totally dis-

associates itself with these figures — other than the £100 million. The message from Mr Robinson is that Forte is a "top heavy" organisation, a perception that augurs better for chefs than for "expensive management". Granada's chief executive emphasises that cost reductions will not merely relate to redundancies. Much is made of Granada/Forte's potential purchasing muscle. Mr Robinson also spoke yesterday of how Forte's yield could be improved by "more confident pricing".

In response to Forte's forecast of a 46 per cent rise in 1995-96 pre-tax profits to £185 million, Granada argues that in real terms this is some 10 per cent less than the levels achieved five years ago and represents a return on capital of just 7.2 per cent. Similarly, Granada predicts that Forte is "doubtless planning" to increase its dividend. Should the payment be raised by almost one-third this would still only match the level of five years ago.

Sir Rocco Forte retorts that

Granada's £100 million claim lacks "credibility or supporting detail". Perhaps enough detail to suggest that Mr Robinson's natural instincts are not necessarily about building businesses.

Sensitivity at the CSO

□ THE gentle number crunchers at the Central Statistical Office were behaving most peculiarly yesterday. They announced that the £50 electricity rebate after the National Grid float will not be counted as a price cut but as a transfer of income and listed solid reasons for the decision: the treatment as an income effect is consistent with European guidelines, the rebate is not related to electricity consumption, it does not apply in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Fair enough.

Why then did the CSO refuse point blank to say what the effect on inflation would have been if it

had been treated as a price cut? Why did it say that it would be looking very carefully at the media's coverage of the decision? Why did it say that it did not deal in "what ifs" when, in the past, it has always been most obliging in computing, for example, the effect on the RPI of a 1 per cent cut in mortgage rates.

The mystery deepens when one recalls that the CSO answered exactly this question only a month ago. Then, it was perfectly happy to say that headline inflation would have been cut by 1 to 1.5 per cent early next year. The Treasury gaily gave out the same figure — yesterday.

Why this sudden cloak and dagger stuff from the gnomes of Great George Street? The answer is obvious. If the rebate had been counted as a price cut, inflation in the new year would have dropped sharply. But it would then have risen by the same amount in the first months of 1997 — just before a late election. It is rare that the arcane decisions of statisticians have a potential effect on the electoral fortunes of a government. The independent CSO has clearly been nothing less than scrupulous but its sudden burst of sensitivity unwisely gives ammunition to conspiracy theorists.

Southern defends low payout and NP bid

By Christine Buckley

SOUTHERN ELECTRIC yesterday pledged continued support for a takeover by National Power, which has lapsed after a referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC), while turning in the lowest special payout to shareholders.

The company is returning about £150 million to investors with a special dividend of 50p a share. The previous day, East Midlands had set the highest of the dividend payouts at £1.20p a share. John Deane, finance director, defended the level of payout.

"People have got used to very short-term actions and short-term value returns," he said. "We aim to deliver value over a longer period."

Southern also blamed its tax position for delivering a less generous return than by sev-

eral of its peers. It also said that it had benefited from low gas prices to the tune of £5 million. With the company's power projects making their first contribution to results — serving up £9.8 million in the six months to September 30 — Mr Deane said that more than half of that amount was attributable to low gas prices.

The company is currently preparing an offensive to persuade the MMC that the bid by National Power, the UK's largest generator, should go ahead.

The bid, along with the offer by PowerGen for Midlands Electricity, was referred to the MMC by Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, last month in a move which surprised the industry.

The deadline for the decision is March 22, although there are signs that the Gov-



Wilson: link makes sense

will aim to convince the MMC of that. So far the company has sent responses to a series of exhaustive questions with further communication expected to resume soon in the new year.

Southern said that it would distribute its holding in the National Grid, which became an independently floated company on Monday, to its shareholders on the basis of 66 grid shares for every 100 held in Southern.

The company had delayed an announcement on the distribution of its grid interest while the bid from National Power had been pending. The company also said it intended to consolidate its shares with an exchange of 93 new shares for every 100.

The interim dividend, payable January 29, was lifted 26 per cent to 10.5p.

UK bids, page 26

Arjo faces claims of price-fixing

By Alasdair Murray

ARJO Wiggins Appleton, the paper manufacturing company, is facing court action in America over claims it has been indulging in price-fixing.

The company revealed yesterday that its US subsidiary, Appleton Papers, has been indicted by the US Department of Justice for conspiring to fix the price of thermal fax paper in 1991. Last year, a Japanese paper manufacturer, Kazuaki, pleaded guilty to similar charges and was fined \$6 million.

The company said it believes that Appleton has done nothing wrong and will vigorously fight the charges. Arjo's share price slipped 5p to 156p. The maximum fine if it is found guilty is \$10 million, although the company said that any ultimate liability would not have an adverse effect on the group's balance sheet and it is making no provision.

Shake-up knocks Daily Mail group

By Paul Durman

MUCH heavier than expected redundancy and reorganisation costs at Associated Newspapers, the Daily Mail publisher, dealt a hefty blow to profits at the stock market-quoted Daily Mail and General Trust.

Pre-tax profits for the year to October 1 tumbled from £92.1 million to £66.8 million. Like all newspaper groups, DMA&G has had to meet sharply higher paper costs, which added nearly £20 million to its newspaper bill.

But the City was surprised by the £2.8 million provision the company made to cover reorganisation. Although some of this was at the *Evening Post*, Nottingham, and the Euro money financial publishing arm, the bulk stemmed from changes at the Associated Newspapers flagship, Associated made 150 to 200 administrative staff redundant a few months ago, and is believed to have run up

further costs "buying out" various staff benefits. DMA&G said it had not cut editorial, circulation or advertising budgets.

David Forster at Merrill Lynch expects the August price increases of the *Daily Mail* and *The Mail on Sunday* to add £28 million to revenues. Although DMA&G faces a full year of higher paper costs, he is forecasting profits to rebound to £111 million this year.

Start-up costs, mainly from Channel One, the London cable-TV operation, were £10 million higher than the previous year. Peter Williams, DMA&G finance director, said 320,000 subscribers have access to Channel One, and a recent survey suggested that 18 per cent of them were watching it. The company will pay an increased final dividend of 13.5p on February 16. This will lift the total payout to 17.8p a share.

Companies get help on derivatives

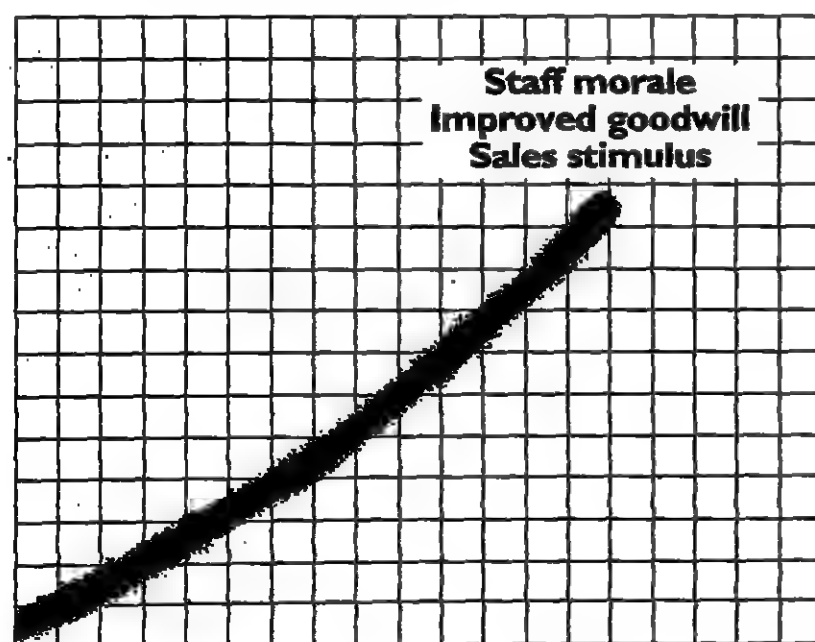
By Robert Miller

CONCERN that risks associated with speculative and often volatile derivative investments are not understood by company directors and senior managers has led to a new set of guidelines being published by the Futures and Options Association (FOA).

The FOA, with backing from other trade bodies, including the British Bankers Association and the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange, has also established a panel of specialists to advise companies on the risk controls that they should put in place when using derivatives.

The FOA guidelines say that companies intending to use derivatives should have a clear policy on futures and options and should provide "effective supervision".

Several well-known companies have lost money using instruments such as interest rate and currency swaps.



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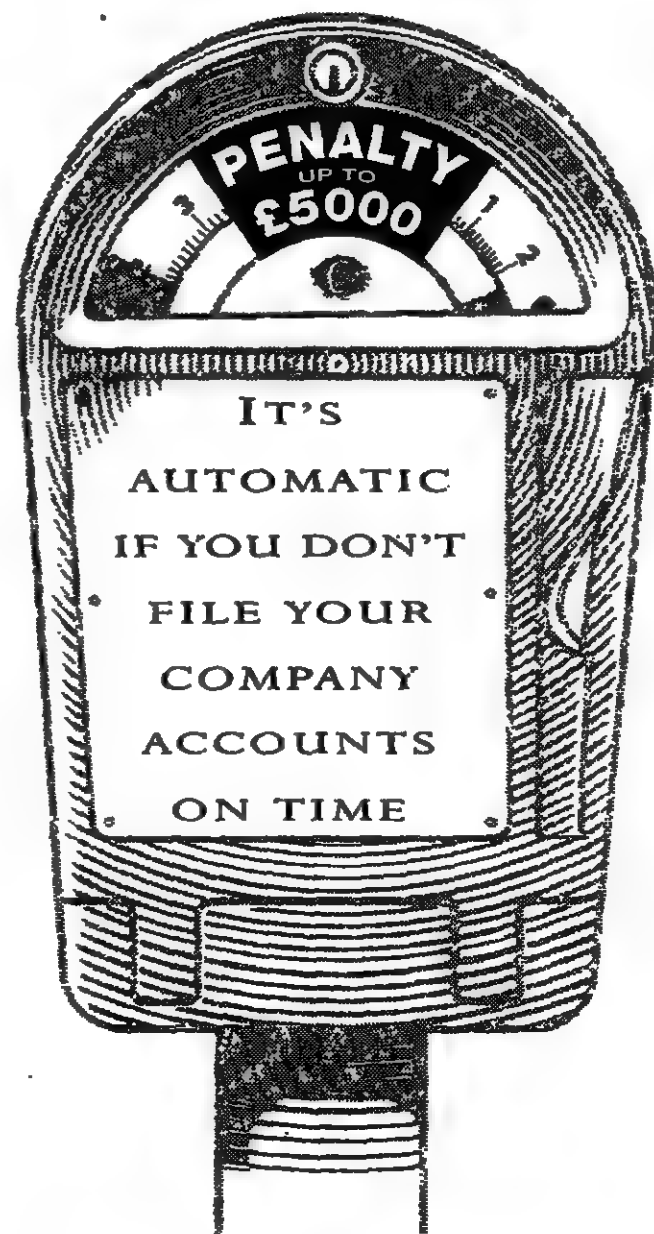
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Examples of some deadlines for creating private limited companies are shown below.

Company Accounting Reference Date	Deadline for delivery to Companies House (Private Companies)
28 February 1995	28 December 1995
31 March 1995	31 January 1996
30 April 1995	29 February 1996

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Shares race to record high but then take a tumble

SHARE prices soared to record levels on confirmation of the cut in German interest rates and the news that inflation was on the way down.

This latest boost to the Chancellor's economic policy came just 24 hours after bank base rates were trimmed a quarter point to 6.5 per cent and home loans fell to their lowest levels for 30 years.

But the City's euphoria proved short lived, after climbing 24 points to a best ever 3,665.5, the FT-SE 100 index reduced its lead to close 9.2 up at 3,671.6.

An opening fall in the Dow Jones average on Wall Street, having hit its 69th record closing high the night before, unsettled investors. The December series of futures and options are due to expire later today and it was inevitable that some profit taking would develop ahead of the event.

But investors remain worried about the economy. Despite the Chancellor's optimistic view of the economy, there is overall scepticism about the 3 per cent growth forecast and the market is clearly worried by the seemingly never-ending stream of profit warnings from leading companies.

BT has been told by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission it will have to contribute towards the cost of customers keeping their existing number when they switch to another phone company. The MMC says BT will have to pay about 70 per cent of the cost amounting to £150 million over the next five years. The other phone companies will have to pay the rest. It had been feared that BT costs might have been higher.

BT ended the session 5p dearer at 348.9p, while Cable and Wireless turned 2p to 450p, Nyxnet Cable 4p to 124p, General Cable 4p to 197p, and TeleWest 3p to 165p.

Half-year figures from Asda exceeded even the most optimistic forecasts with the group weighing in with a 27 per cent leap in pre-tax profits to £138.3 million. The group has managed to outperform all its major rivals with like-for-like sales up almost 13 per cent which boosted market share from 9.7 per cent to 10.1 per cent. Unlike other supermarket chains it also recorded a small improvement in operating margins. Shareholders were rewarded with an 18 per cent increase in the payout to 0.72p. Brokers expect Asda to



Receiving end: phone portability could cost BT £150 million

continue to increase market share and have pencilled in a figure of £300 million for the year end. News of Asda's increase in market share came as bad news for the rest of the supermarket operators. There were setbacks for Sainsbury, down 4p at 375p, Argyl, the Safeway chain, 24p to 107.4p and Tesco 3p to 301p. Kwik Save, which fell sharply on

230p after denying plans to sell Bain Hogg, its insurance broking arm. Talk of a bid drove Sedgwick Group, the insurance broker, 8p higher at 124p. There has been persistent speculation in the City of a possible merger with Willis Corroon 44p dearer at 146p. Elsewhere in the financial sector, Bank of Scotland, up

After trading just above their low of 138p, Lloyd Thompson shares are enjoying a revival. The price rose 10p to 164p yesterday stretching its two-day lead to 22p. Two directors yesterday picked up 150,000 shares. The trustees of the company's share ownership have also bought a further 500,000.

Wednesday after a profits warning, regained its poise to finish all-square at 519p.

Isotape appears to be enjoying a revival in fortunes since dropping out of the top 100 companies last week following the recent collapse in its share price. The shares stood at 202p when they lost their role as a constituent of the FT-SE, but ended the session another 12p higher at

12p at 290p, and Royal Bank of Scotland, 10p better at 566p, are again being tipped as potential takeover targets. Guardian Royal Electric continues to dream of a bid from BAT Industries with the price up 4p at 272p. BAT finished 5p lower at 566p.

Investors had to contend with a whole clutch of figures from the utilities. Southern Water rounded off the report-

ing season for the water companies with first-half figures at the top end of forecasts. Pre-tax profits ran out at £83.7 million. The news that the group is to proceed with its share buy-back programme lifted the price 9p to 667p.

The market gave a lukewarm reception to half-year figures from Scottish Hydro with brokers expressing concern about the growing level of debt. It has borrowed a further £450 million to finance the acquisition of the former pumped storage arm of the National Grid. The shares finished 2p easier at 359p.

Scottish Electric is paying a special dividend of 50p after the referral of National Power's bid to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. This is in addition to a 27 per cent rise in the interim dividend to 10.5p and a 93-for-100 share consolidation. Pre-tax profits at the half-way stage were up from £106.8 million to £127.8 million. But the shares ended the session down 11p at 917p.

London Electricity also plans to hand out the money to shareholders in the shape of a special 100p dividend. The news coincided with half-year figures showing pre-tax profits slightly down on last year's £85.3 million leaving the shares 16p lower at 678p.

Soaring newspaper prices and start-up costs punched a £30 million hole in Daily Mail & General Trust's full-year figures and left pre-tax profits down at £66.8 million compared with £92.1 million last year. The group promised a return to growth in the current year but the shares closed 5p off at £12.98.

GLIT-EDGED: Despite an element of profit taking later in the day, prices managed to close with some healthy gains. In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt finished 2½p better at £10.7.

There was further evidence of a steepening in the yield curve with demand directed at issues within the five to nine year range. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2013 rose ¼ to £103½, while at the shorter end Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was ½p better at £105½.

NEW YORK: Wall Street shares were under pressure in morning trading still facing the cross currents of triple witching. The Dow Jones industrial average at midday was down 11.20 points at 5,205.27.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	5205.27 (-11.20)
S&P Composite	618.86 (-2.83)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	19699.50 (+215.82)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	9912.84 (+10.08)
Amsterdam:	
EOE Index	478.70 (+0.67)
Sydney:	
ASX	2222.70 (+2.90)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	2285.85 (+0.85)
Singapore:	
Strait Times	2204.66 (+32.61)
Brussels:	
General	6320.84 (+20.44)
Paris:	
CAC-40	1874.98 (+11.22)
Zurich:	
SEA Index	709.60 (+0.30)
London:	
FT 30	3664.4 (-9.2)
FT 100	3671.6 (-9.2)
FTSE Mid 250	3561.7 (+19.4)
FTSE-A 250	1817.9 (+5.9)
FT-SE Euro Stoxx 100	1474.46 (+5.88)
FT All-Share	1790.73 (+5.19)
FT Non Financials	1884.1 (+5.68)
FT Financials	1149.1 (+0.09)
FT Govt Secs	96.05 (+0.08)
Bargains	2773
SEAQ Volume	854
USM (Quoterm)	100.39 (-1.1)
USA	1.5393 (+0.0066)
German Mark	2.2197 (+0.0022)
Swiss Franc	1.5304 (+0.0001)
Bank of England official call (4pm)	
ECU	1.3642
ESDR	1.3642
RPT	148.8 Nov (3.1%) Jan 1997-100
RFX	148.8 Nov (2.9%) Jan 1987-100

RECENT ISSUES

Abstrut Hi Inc (100)	96	- 14
Arion Props	9	...
BZW Equities (300)	303	...
Benfield & Res	103	...
CMG (250)	331	...
Cash Converters Int	28	- 1
Com de Pari FIA	510	...
Corworth (150)	151	...
Cox Insurance	110	...
East Surrey NV	448	...
First Tech Tst (100)	102	...
Gardner (1)	130	...
Geared Income C	98	...
Geatstone Gp (200)	203	...
Jasmin	80	...
London Town	80	...
Martin Curr Jpn	98	+
Martin Curr Jpn Ws	35	+
National Grid (204)	204	+
Pepette Turps (200)	234	+
Pet City	360	+
Revelation Pice	100	...
Tracodon	44	+
Vano Group	272	+
Winnington	64	+

RIGHTS ISSUES

Allied Leds n/p (34)	7	...
Dunlop Hse n/p	2	...
Roxbury n/p (5)	4	...
TBI n/p (50)	3	...
The TV Corp n/p (97)	6	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
Forward Gp	883p (+58p)
Indicaps	230p (+12p)
Asda	265p (+13p)
Ferguson Int	220p (+10p)
Dalgety	410p (+17p)
Delphi	341p (+14p)
Regent Inns	654p (+25p)
FALLS:	
Phoneline	200p (-50p)
Unipain	650p (-50p)
REXAM	347p (-20p)
Security Serv	880p (-20p)
Dorling Kind	537p (-12p)
Securitor A	670p (-15p)

Closing Prices Page 28

TEMPUS

Per ardua ad Asda

ASDA has a tendency to aim high and then overshoot its target. Its latest goal of lifting like-for-like sales by between 5 and 10 per cent a year looks ambitious and curiously out of step with its own view of the industry.

Archie Norman, Asda's chief executive, paints a picture of slow growth and worsening price competition, a trend that is forcing food retailers to look to service gimmicks and loyalty cards in their efforts to lift sales.

Asda has managed to outperform the competition for each of the last 38 months. The 12.6 per cent rise in underlying sales in the 28 weeks to November 11 is more than double the industry average and far ahead of the nearest rival, Tesco, which notched up a 6 per cent like-for-like advance in the 24 weeks to August 12. Asda is still riding high on the productivity loop — lower prices stimulating

increased sales, which reduce cost ratios and in turn lead to improved profits enabling lower prices.

Worries that this wheel will soon stop turning are premature. Asda's supermarkets are bigger than the average outlet and more floorspace puts the group in pole position to make the most of the move into higher-margin, non-food retailing. Added to that development are cost benefits from Asda's £70 million investment in new systems.

Management concerns are also troubling investors, including rumours that Mr Norman might choose to abandon his high profile role of food industry boss for the obscurity of the Tory back benches. These are overplayed, the Asda management is strong enough to carry on should their leader choose to tilt at windmills in Westminster.

Securitor

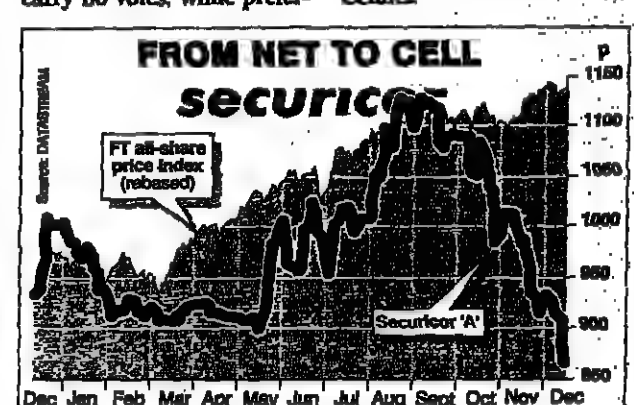
THE City cannot make up its mind how to value Securitor. Hitherto, analysts have focused on the group's 40 per cent stake in Cellnet, which, in the past year, produced 70 per cent of the profit and assumed that managed guarding and distribution were the icing on the cake.

However, the security business is looking distinctly less sweet as new entrants, such as Rentokil, increase competition and depress margins. More important, the Government has blocked the sale of Securitor's Cellnet interest to BT. With the obvious buyer ruled out, questions must begin to be asked whether the group's 40 per cent stake is still worth the £1.5 billion claimed by optimists.

Securitor would still like to realise its investment. A

disposal would return value to shareholders in the form of a special dividend, allow further investment in distribution and prisons and provide the funds to sort out the company's confusing and archaic share structure which restricts voting to ordinary shareholders. The more widely traded "A" shares carry no votes, while prefer-

ence shareholders can also participate in ordinary dividends. A flotation of the Cellnet stake is still a possibility but Securitor should act quickly. Cellnet is confined to the UK, the most mature market for mobile phones, and the continuing success of Orange will depress further the value of Cellnet.



Scottish Hydro

SCOTTISH Hydro-Electric could be left waiting at the altar next week. First Hydro, the pumped storage business which used to be a part of the National Grid, is expected to reject the modest local boy in favour of an American waving lots of cash.

Hydro-Electric is anxious to secure its position ahead of the free-for-all energy market due to arrive in 1998. With the race for First Hydro all but lost, the question for the Scots is where will it find an alternative investment. The generator is alone among the four main power-producing companies in rejecting the option of a bid for a regional electricity company.

Hydro, which last year defied the electricity regulator over pricing and was referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, has indicated a preference for buying up individual assets rather than whole electricity companies. The company is

keener on supply than distribution and such a strategy sits more comfortably in its balance sheet.

Meanwhile talks with British Gas continue over a possible joint development of a power station. Hydro already has such a joint venture with Norweb. Overseas projects open other possibilities although Hydro will do better to consolidate the customer base in England and Wales which is showing strong signs of growth.

M&G

M&G prides itself on its long-term approach to investment but the company seems to believe there is a risk that its own fund managers might take a short-term view of their jobs. Administrative costs soared during the past year, in large part due to a £9 million charge relating to reorganisation and investment in new technology, but within the overall increase

the company admitted to an 8 per cent rise in staff costs.

M&G blamed the 5 per cent real increase in the salary bill on the need to bring fund manager salaries up to industry standards. The company pointed to the bid rumours in the sector which have sent the shares of fund management companies rocketing in the hope that big banks will make ludicrously expensive offers. That in turn leads to the worry that the main assets of the companies may go to rival companies.

The bids have so far failed to emerge and share prices are off their peaks but M&G is still looking dear, trading on a forward multiple of 20 times compared with 17.5 for retail pension fund manager MAM. In a difficult market, M&G is making gains in the fight for retail business which over the longer term should grow rapidly. Even so, M&G's price should slip back further.

EDITED BY CARL MORTIMER

COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE			
COCOA			
Dec	889.80	Mar	1013.10
Jan	892.91	Jun	1026.08
Feb	892.91	Sep	1026.08
Jul	919.70	Dec	1026.08
Nov	989.80		
Dec	1003.10	Volume	3023
ROBUSTA COFFEE (C)			
Jan	2295.230	Dec	1715.1714
Mar	2300.190	Nov	1720.1870
May	2300.190	Oct	1720.1870
Jul	1780.170	Volume	845
WHITE SUGAR (C)			
Dec	300.00	Dec	300.00
Jan	300.00	Jan	300.00
Feb	300.00	Feb	300.00
Mar	300.00	Mar	300.00
Apr	300.00	Apr	300.00
May	300.00	May	300.00
Jun	300.00	Jun	300.00
Jul	300.00	Jul	300.00
Aug	300.00	Aug	300.00
Sep	300.00	Sep	300.00
Oct	300.00	Oct	300.00
Nov	300.00	Nov	300.00
Dec	300.00	Dec	300.00
MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION			
Average futures prices at representative markets on 15/12/95			
Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Beef	lb	112.71	+116.76
Lamb	lb	45.34	+1.30
Pork	lb	112.71	+116.76
Chicken	lb	112.71	+116.76
Turkey	lb	112.71	+116.76
Stewards	lb	112.71	+116.76
Veal	lb	112.71	+116.76
Butter	lb	112.71	+116.76
Cheese	lb	112.71	+116.76
Eggs	lb	112.71	+116.76
Wheat	lb	112.71	+116.76
Barley	lb	112.71	+116.76
Oats	lb	112.71	+116.76
Rye	lb	112.71	+116.76
Maize	lb	112.71	+116.76
Soybeans	lb	112.71	+116.76
Wheat	lb	112.71	+116.76
Barley	lb	112.71	+116.76
Oats	lb	112.71	+116.76
Rye	lb	112.71	+116.76
Maize	lb	112.71	+116.76
Soybeans	lb	112.71	+116.76
Wheat	lb	112.71	+116.76
Barley	lb	112.71	+116.76
Oats	lb	112.71	+116.76
Rye	lb	112.71	+116.76
Maize	lb	112.71	+116.76
Soybeans	lb	112.71	+116.76

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES						
	Period	Open	High	Low	Settle	Volume
FT-SE 100	Dec 95	3669.0	3695.0	3653.0	3675.0	1594
Previous open Interest: 84330	Mar 96	3694.0	3721.0	3670.0	3701.0	1388
FT-SE 250	Dec 95	3960.0	3960.0	3960.0	3960.0	17
Previous open Interest: 369	Mar 96	3968.0	3990.0	3950.0	3995.0	17
Three Month Sterling	Dec 95	93.30	93.31	93.30	93.30	7314
Previous open Interest: 93.30	Mar 96	93.62	93.67	93.61	93.65	9789
Jun 96		93.97	94.08	93.97	94.02	12949
Three Month Eurodollar	Dec 95				94.31	0
Previous open Interest: 110	Mar 96				94.60	0
Three Month Euro DM	Dec 95	96.10	96.25	96.10	96.15	6254
Previous open Interest: 99334	Mar 96	96.10	96.30	96.30	96.45	6046
Long Gilt	Dec 95	111.10	111.11	111.10	111.10	1195
Previous open Interest: 15146	Mar 96	110.82	111.03	110.30	110.58	3704
Japanese Govt Bond	Mar 96	121.89	121.98	121.83	121.98	103
Jun 96		121.41	120.41	120.41	120.49	20
German Gov Bd Bund	Mar 96	98.98	98.98	98.98	98.99	0
Previous open Interest: 206237	Jun 96	98.20	98.16	98.29	98.09	11561
Three month ECU	Dec 95	94.02	94.01	94.01	94.04	1094
Previous open Interest: 3070	Mar 96	94.01	94.02	94.01	94.09	1096
Three Month Swiss Franc	Dec 95	97.95	97.96	97.95	98.00	9789
Previous open Interest: 53321	Mar 96	98.18	98.20	98.15	98.28	13370
Italian Govt Bond	Mar 96	106.87	106.64	105.23	106.41	9321
Previous open Interest: 49230	Jun 96	105.35	105.35	104.00	105.03	101
MONEY RATES (%)						

THE TIMES

CITY DIARY

Doctors in distress

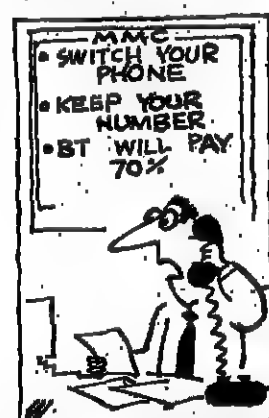
THE loss of the Amec account to rivals Dewe Rogerson and the rap from the Takeover Panel could not have come at a worse time for Financial Dynamics, the City spin doctors. Financial Dynamics directors are in the final stages of negotiating lucrative earn-outs with the firm's principal shareholder, BDDP of France. The directors include Tony Knox, a founding partner and voice of Amec for many years.

Across the City at Dewe Rogerson, Martin Jackson has been handed the job of saving Amec from the clutches of Kwerner. He has just four days to do the job, for the acrimonious bid must close on Monday. Not surprisingly, he seems more relaxed than Knox. "Martin cannot lose," said a friend. "If Amec wins, he will be hailed as a saviour. If Amec loses, he can blame Financial Dynamics."

Hole sale glut

DISTRESSD golf courses are such a drag on the market that Knight Frank & Rutley, the estate agent, has set up a consulting team to encourage buyers "to see potential where none exists, any more for the current owners". Surprisingly, for nineteenth hole enthusiasts, the experts reckon it is better to spend cash on basics such as the actual course rather than on add-ons such as the clubhouse and restaurant. A less useful tip is that, as for any property based investment, the location is by far the most important factor. Moving your bargain could prove expensive.

CHRISTMAS is proving as great a commercial opportunity as ever this year if the Christmas cards received by your humble columnist are anything to go by. A friendly card from the management and staff of neighbouring Canary Wharf has a large picture of... on the front. A similar greeting from Messrs Guinness is adorned with Bell's, Gordon's, Dewar, etc.



"The cost! We're talking telephone numbers."

Money talks

FOUND for Pound, a new personal finance show, is to join BBC2's stable of specialist programmes aimed at a wider audience. The new six-part series starts on January 2 and includes a challenge for an investment broker and a consortium of six farmers to go head-to-head and double £100. Michael Clark, one of the show's presenters and coincidentally the stock market correspondent of The Times, says that any plans to double the money "must be legal and not frighten the horses". Sounds an impossible task to me.

Sardines again

CHRISTMAS Greetings from Gwendolyn Lamb, who is coming up to her 14th Christmas living, as she puts it, on sardines. Lamb was a depositor in the Isle of Man Bank, which was unceremoniously closed down in 1982, and has fought a ceaseless campaign for restitution. "It's a scandal," she rages. "I'm still living on sardines, while the liquidators drink champagne."



Staff at a City firm enjoying their annual Christmas outing. Many companies have splashed out this year on providing entertainment.

Party time again as British business enters festive spirit

Victoria McKee finds that the corporate Christmas is alive and kicking up its heels

It is the season to be jolly, and Britain's businesses are entering into the party spirit more wholeheartedly than for years. Virtually every party planner and venue seems to be running several events a day, with some companies prepared to spend up to £500 a head to raise corporate morale.

As Kim Eyre-Varnier, who has arranged this year's black-tie bash on December 19 for the London advertisers, Delaney Fletcher Bozell, put it: "You could pay people more but it wouldn't be worth as much."

John Nicholson, the business psychologist and management consultant whose firm advises companies as diverse as Walt Disney, Sun Alliance and British Telecom, said: "There's no question about it, the Christmas party is important. You should do it and do it properly. It is motivating and fun and is invariably a good investment in time and money. It gives a message that 'our people are important'."

How important? Many companies like to stick within the Government's tax-deductible limit and were encouraged by the increase to £75 this year. To help companies to keep within the limit some of the big themed London venues such as the City Christmas Fair at Royal Victoria Dock, or the Cadogan Hall, turned by William Bartholomew into a "Scottish Christmas" complete with castle, offer popular packages of £60 per person, including all drink.

Others consider their staff worth much more, tax deductible or not. Caroline Armstrong-Jones, who with her husband Peregrine, Lord Snowdon's half brother, runs Bentley's Entertainment, said: "Most of our clients are spending at least double that, although our parties run from £100 to £500 a head."

Bentley's is doing corporate parties every day throughout December, many with elaborate themes that are kept secret from all but the party planners. "We've got one for a big advertising agency in a church in Kensington with a really funky band, and another James Bond party with lots of special effects - silver Aston Martins, beautiful girls, great music, lush locations."

Intercapital, the City brokers, has found that "people remember the themed parties for two or three years afterwards". Michael Spencer, its managing director, is convinced they're good for business. This year, at the Gibson Hall, he played the role of the Tsar enjoying a White Russian Christmas on the eve of the 1917 revolution, being captured, in the middle of a sumptuous state banquet, by guests encouraged to feel like Russian peasants. In cases like this, the secrecy beforehand can reach fever pitch, and staff may be "teased" with hints for weeks in advance, raising excitement and, theoretically, productivity.

Philidrew Ventures of Finsbury Square held a big Rio-themed party at the Berkeley Hotel, complete with palm trees and salsa girls. Frank Delphina Studios, and James Bond parties in the old M15 building for an advertising company and a hotel group, he is busy every night with his ready-made Scottish Christmas, BZW and Morse Computers have been among those enjoying a discotheque and four-course dinner for £69 a head at Cadogan Hall in Chelsea.

For those with smaller companies and less desire for exclusivity, Elegant Days offers the opportunity to buy tables at its City Fair, complete with dogdoms, Big Wheel and heater-skelter. Banks, insurance and investment companies, advertising agencies and television types are among those buying tables there.

"A lot are understandably coy about talking about how much money they spend on parties," says Eddie Hoare of Elegant Days, chairman of the Corporate Hospitality Association, who would like to set a British standard for business entertaining, should such a thing be possible.

The changing face of work means that Christmas parties are no longer just for those who know each other in more relaxed circumstances. With increasing numbers of teleworkers, outside managers and "interim managers", the annual party can be one of the few times to meet and network with colleagues who are usually just names on electronic memoranda or a voice on the end of a phone.

"Everyone will turn up with their own agenda and it's vital to understand that, as only those who can read the hidden agendas will do well at office parties," said Dr David Cowell, a specialist in the psychology of work. While he does not advise talking shop openly, you should "make sure you drop subtle comments of the right sort in the right ears", he suggested. "And remember that it's always better to turn up, even if you end up making a fool of yourself, than not to have turned up at all."

Dr Terry Kallard, a psychologist specialising in change in organisational function, said: "The annual party is a place where the hierarchical barriers tend to disappear, and in my experience the more you can break down those stupid barriers, the more effective the organisation is likely to become - as companies such as Rover have shown."

Yet Rover does not appear particularly festive and, except for a big annual dinner dance for its Rover Sport group, held in Bournemouth last weekend, saves its celebrations for launches. Ian Strachan, its press spokesman, said: "As a car company, we're a dry site and don't have a company Christmas party. However, small groups who work together may go out to local restaurants, either paying their own way, or with bosses paying out of their own pockets."

That is still better than cutting out a party completely, Mr Nicholson said. "British Gas has announced that it's not going to contribute to its annual pensioners' party. That will be a huge strategic mistake," he said.

The Hoover plant in Scotland, Courtaulds Aerospace in Darlington and the Guardian Royal Exchange in London, are among the "Scrooges" singled out in a Labour Research Department survey, in which 40 firms, employing more than 130,000 people, out of 105 firms questioned admitted they did nothing for staff at Christmas.

Mr Nicholson, who attends numerous Christmas parties in his role as outside consultant, commented yesterday: "It's a false economy to cut back on the party. You're losing so much of the goodwill factor, which is like credit in the bank."

Seasonal song for partygoers

BUSINESS LETTERS

State's demands on Post Office

From Mr David Cope
Sir, Over the last few years, the Post Office has, in the light of the expected privatisation, reduced costs and increased efficiency to augment its viability to potential investors. In a labour-intensive industry, this has, by and large, been achieved at the expense of full-time jobs. Emergent technology, and a shift in policy towards a part-time and casual workforce has further undermined the morale of the employees. Job security, we are constantly reminded, can only come through increased productivity, from diversification, by investment.

We on the front line of the industry are under no illusions. When Mr Clarke levies his windfall tax, the business will respond by "cutting out another slice of fat", and that will mean through the flesh and down to the bone of the rank and file.

Please spare a thought for the inevitable casualties amongst those that have helped to make Britain's postal service the envy of the world. Yours faithfully, DAVID COPE, 124 Minerva Street, Bulwell, Nottingham.

Tax imposition will encourage departures of key staff

From Messrs Kingston Smith
Sir, The Chancellor's revised proposals for the tax treatment of share options still fail to address the main concern of successful private companies. Unless their benefit falls within the £20,000 limit, employees of private companies who profit from exercising Inland Revenue-approved share options will be subject to an immediate tax charge without the means to pay for it.

This is because, unlike public companies, employees of private companies will not be able to sell some of their shares on the stock market to raise the funds to pay the tax.

The Chancellor's continued imposition will encourage key people to leave private companies earlier than would otherwise be the case - because private companies normally buy back shares from departing employees and that may be the only way that employees will be able to raise the funds to pay the tax.

This contradicts entirely the original purpose of share option schemes which was to motivate people to stay and contribute to the growth in the value of their company. A fair

and practical solution for private companies would be to defer the collection of such tax until the shares are eventually sold.

Once again, the public company perspective on events has dominated the headlines, whereas the needs of private companies, which are so important to the growth of our economy, are overlooked.

Yours faithfully, KINGSTON SMITH, Chartered Accountants, Devonshire House, 146 Bishopsgate, EC2.

existing offer, which is about three times the amount that litigants could hope to achieve in court.

Members of Lloyd's are elected to the Council to act on behalf of the whole Society, not one part of it. They are not supposed to act as delegates.

Welsh Water's profit sources

From Mr T. C. J. Carter
Sir, It was very interesting to read of the 63% rise in profits of Welsh Water and the way the company attributes their performance to increased efficiency (Business News, November 25).

However, it should be remembered that they are by far the highest when it comes to charging. I know of households both in Gloucester (Severn Trust) and Worthing (East Sussex), which are very similar to mine, where the combined water and sewage charges are only 60% of our bill. Perhaps "enthusiastic billing" should be added to the reasons for good performance.

Yours faithfully, T. C. J. CARTER, 8 Woodland View, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire.

Banking discrepancy

Pre-BSE Corner House nostalgia

From Lord Brightman
Sir, Following upon Mr Donald Reeves's letter (December 12), I also am wrapped in waves of intense nostalgia. In the early 1950s, as an impetuous barrister, I regarded the Coventry Street Corner House as the finest eating place in London. On the infrequent occasions when I received a brief, I would take my wife there for a superb duck roasted on the spit, or a salmon, served

by our favourite Polish waiter, recently released from his country's armed forces. I remember it all so well. We took some of our many French friends there. It was not expensive. One of them, a member of the Academie Française, told us that the beef (pre-BSE) was better than any he could eat in Paris.

Yours nostalgically, BRIGHTMAN, House of Lords, SW1.

Showdown Down Under as unions show teeth

Rachel Bridge on labour strife that has blocked a P&O deal in Australia

Companies operating in Australia are bracing themselves for a renewed industrial strife as the country's trade unions take centre stage in a last-ditch attempt to prove that they still matter.

Faced with steadily declining union membership, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) has ended ten years of industrial relations stability to show business and government it still has the muscle to fight its corner.

British businesses have been the first to feel the impact. Last month, P&O, the British shipping giant, had to abandon its proposed acquisition of ANL, Australia's national shipping line, after maritime unions refused to back down over their demands that the Government retain a ten-year golden share in the business and that ANL's Asian shipping operations be protected. The unions had threatened a national waterfront strike if the sale to P&O went ahead without their consent.

The week before, CRA - the mining giant that is being merged with Britain's RTZ - had to abandon plans to introduce higher-paid individual contracts for its workers after the unions backed 70 striking CRA workers who had refused to sign by calling a national coal strike and threatening an all-out national strike if CRA did not back down. In what the ACTU described as a victory for the union movement, CRA has now agreed to give its non-union workers an 8 per cent pay rise and drop legal action against them.

The union's timing could not be better. Although the Australian Government had made clear that it much preferred to sell ANL to P&O than to retain it and restructure it, ministers have little stomach for a damaging national strike in the run-up to what is expected to be a closely fought election. When its attempts at brokering a deal between the two sides failed, the Government had little choice but to admit defeat and call the whole thing off.

Richard Heine, P&O's chief executive in Australia, says he was "disappointed but not surprised" by the Government decision not to sell after the union's demands, which he describes as "unrealistic and impossible to meet commercially", proved unacceptable to the company.

P&O and CRA are now counting the cost of their skirmishes with the unions. P&O is understood to have spent more than \$15 million (£730,000) in direct costs associated with buying ANL, not to mention more than year of management time wasted on the proposed deal, ending with three months of intense negotiations with the unions. CRA is estimated to have lost several million dollars of profit from the coal strike, and the cost to Australian business as a whole is put at more than \$270 million.

Dick Warburton, one of Australia's leading industrialists, has warned of the damage to industry that the unions' hard-line stance could inflict, saying: "Any time you get a dispute of this nature, the stakes keep getting ratcheted upwards and eventually one side believes it has got to win the battle. Ultimately, though, we all lose the war."

The unions are determined not to do things by halves, bringing in Bob Hawke, the former Prime Minister and union stalwart, to present their case for collective bargaining. In the job that he held 25 years ago, in typical grandiose style, Mr Hawke described the battle with CRA as the most significant industrial dispute of the post-war period.

Many, however, see the union's sabre-rattling as its last stand in an era in which collective bargaining is becoming less relevant to the needs of the Australian workforce. Many workers have already turned their back on unionism in exchange for higher pay, while the rise of service industries, such as hospitality and information technology, and the increase in part-time work and contractors are eroding the unions' membership base.

CRA has made clear that it intends to press on with introducing individual contracts, saying: "Our experience has demonstrated that the work of employees who move from a collective work relationship to a direct two-party work relationship is more productive for the company and more enjoyable, as well as being more financially rewarding for employees."

6 Ministers have little stomach for a damaging national strike?

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Following the DIVIDEND DECLARATION by Ford Motor Company (U.S.) on 12 October, 1995 NOTICE is now given that the following DISTRIBUTION will become payable on or after 15 December, 1995.

Gross Distribution per unit	1.7500 Cents
Less 15% USA Withholding Tax	0.2625 Cents
	1.4875 Cents
Converted at \$1.545	£0.00662783

Claims should be lodged with the DEPOSITARY: National Westminster Bank PLC, Basement, Juno Court, 24 Prescott Street, London E1 6BB on special forms obtainable from that office.

United Kingdom Banks and Members of the Stock Exchange should mark payment of the dividend in the appropriate square on the reverse of the certificate.

All other claimants must complete the special form and present this at the above address together with the certificate(s) for marking by the National Westminster Bank PLC. Postal applications cannot be accepted.

Dated 15 December, 1995

UK bids in Australian power sale

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE
IN SYDNEY

POWERGEN and National Power have emerged as bidders for a power station in Australia which is expected to go under the hammer for at least \$2 billion (£966 million). The sale of the coal-fired Yallourn power station is the latest stage of the State Government of Victoria's successful electricity privatisation programme.

The sell-off has already reaped \$9 billion from the sale of the state's five distribution companies, more than twice the amount expected.

However analysts point out that buying a power station is a very different proposition to buying a distributor, with Victoria's wholesale electricity prices expected to fall by between 10 and 15 per cent over the next three years.

The two British contenders are believed to be competing separately for the 1450 MW power station against four American-based consortia, including a team made up of Hanson's US coal mining company Peabody and US power group NRG.

PowerGen is understood to have found itself an Australian partner, while National Power is bidding alone. A shortlist is expected to be announced in January with the winner chosen by the end of February.

Cellnet boosts Securicor profit despite squeeze on market

BY PAUL DURMAN

PRE-CHRISTMAS sales of mobile phones have failed to meet industry expectations, Cellnet said yesterday.

Steve Rowley, Cellnet marketing director, said that, although sales were buoyant, "the absolute size of the market is smaller than we expected". He suggested that the highly competitive offers available throughout this year have prevented a repeat of last year's pre-Christmas sales bonanza.

Cellnet, 40 per cent owned by Securicor Group, which announced full-year results yesterday, added 57,000 new subscribers in October, 69,000 in November and 40,000 so far this month. Mr Rowley said he expected the December total to add between 80,000 and 100,000 subscribers to Cellnet's existing total of two million.

Mr Rowley said Cellnet was "unusually close" to overtaking Vodafone as the largest of the mobile telephone groups. He said Cellnet remains the fastest growing, and that the inroads made by Orange and Mercury One2One had been at the expense of Vodafone.

Securicor's profits from Cellnet rose 26 per cent to £70.6 million in the year to September 30. In contrast, the security, parcel distribution and courier businesses managed by Securicor contributed profits of £30.1 million, a 22 per cent rise. The group total would have exceeded £100



Roger Wiggs, Securicor chief executive, with Chris Shircliffe, finance director, announced profits of £99.4 million

million for the first time last year but for the £1.3 million costs it incurred on the attempted sale, blocked in June by the Government, of the Cellnet stake to BT, which owns the rest of the company.

This pegged group pre-tax profits back to £99.4 million, up from £80.6 million. Group sales passed £1 billion for the

first time. Cellnet has recently introduced a new product that allows calls to be transferred to mobile phones using a traditional four-digit extension number.

Cellnet regards this as the start of the convergence between fixed line and mobile telephony. Roger Wiggs, Securicor's chief executive

said: "I believe Cellnet is driving the market now. It's in control."

Securicor's cash carrying business — it handles more than £100 billion a year — had a tough year, hurt by increased levels of attacks, including a £5 million robbery in Manchester. Earnings per share rose

from 37.5p to 44p. A 20 per cent increase in the final dividend to 3.11p lifts the total to 4.018p. Security Services, the separately quoted group 50.75 per cent owned by Securicor, is paying a final dividend of 5.826p to increase the total to 7.714p.

Tempos, page 24

Scottish Hydro-Electric plc

INTERIM RESULTS FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1995

- Sales up 5.7% with strong growth in England and Wales.
- Stated Earnings per share up 80.4% due to absence of 1994's debt redemption premium.
- Underlying Earnings per share up 10.1%.
- Interim Dividend up 9.4% in line with target.
- Service to Customers improved again.

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Commenting on the results Lord Wilson, Chairman, said:

"Our strong underlying earnings growth has come mainly from improved sales throughout Britain which have offset the real price reductions in most market sectors. The absence of a debt redemption premium this year somewhat distorts comparison of stated figures. The underlying improvement in operating profit and in earnings per share was 7.7% and 10.1% respectively. We have, therefore, raised our interim dividend 9.4% in line with our current growth target. This dividend is covered 2.5 times and will be paid to shareholders on 20 March 1996.

"Sales volumes to domestic customers in Scotland were up on 1994, reversing the negative impact of VAT last year. Commercial and industrial volumes were also increased, but real price reductions offset these achievements so that total turnover in Scotland was slightly down.

"Sales in England and Wales grew strongly. Volume was up by over 18% compared with the same period last year and turnover was up by over 21%. The net overall effect of this was that 37% of total electricity sales volume and 30% of our total turnover was accounted for south of the border. A continuing emphasis on serving smaller customers and reducing costs helped to improve operating margins.

"We have a strong underlying cashflow. Our balance sheet remains robust and well able to support our Scottish investment programme as well as the development projects we are looking to conclude throughout Britain. Gearing remains virtually unchanged from last year at 30%, including our share of the debt of Keadby Power Limited. Interest cover has improved to 30.4 times.

"Improving service to all our customers at lower prices continues to be a high priority. On most performance measures this has been achieved. Customer complaints are down 46% on last year. Raising service standards even further is a key focus of our efforts. We look for more progress in this area.

"Part of our service improvement programme is to spend heavily on the refurbishment of the older, mainly rural, sections of our distribution network so as to improve reliability of supply. Following the MMC's support of our 10 year investment programme in this area, the momentum of work is increasing and we expect customers to see real benefits quite soon.

"Productivity improvements throughout our operations are vital to our ability to deliver both falling real prices and a substantial network investment programme. We have more than trebled productivity since 1989. The further actions now in hand to raise output and reduce costs will further improve performance over the next 2-3 years. In the half year controllable overheads have been cut by 9%.

"We are also seeking to maintain the momentum of our market share expansion which has been a major source of our earnings growth since 1990. Since then we have more than doubled the volume of electricity we trade and we are currently working on a number of new projects aimed at continuing this trend. These will, however, go ahead only if we are satisfied that they fit our tight strategic remit and have good prospects of making attractive returns.

"Hydro-Electric has reached the final round of bidding for First Hydro Ltd, the pumped storage business in England and Wales previously owned by National Grid. The outcome of the sale is expected to be known later in December. If Hydro-Electric is successful at this stage, shareholders' consent to the acquisition will be sought at an EGM in January, full details of which would be given in a circular to all shareholders early in January.

"The second half of the financial year has started satisfactorily and we are confident of an encouraging result for the full period."

Lord Wilson of Tillymorn GCMG

GROUP PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT (UNAUDITED)				
	1995	1994	1995	1995
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Turnover from continuing operations	388.2	367.4	633.1	
Operating profit	64.8	58.5	196.8	
Losses from interests in associated undertakings	1.0	0.2	1.8	
Profit from ordinary activities before interest and similar charges	63.8	58.3	195.0	
Net interest payable	2.1	4.8	7.5	
Premium on redemption of bonds	2	18.8	18.8	
Profit before taxation	61.7	54.3	188.7	
Taxation	16.3	10.4	51.4	
Profit on ordinary activities after taxation	45.4	24.5	117.3	
Minority interests	0.1	0.7	1.8	
Profit for the period	45.5	25.2	118.9	
Dividend	3	18.3	53.8	
Retained profit	27.2	8.5	65.1	
Earnings per share (p) - actual	4	11.85	6.57	31.00

There are no other recognised gains or losses other than the profit for the period

GROUP BALANCE SHEET (UNAUDITED)

	At 30 September 1995	At 31 March 1995	At 31 March 1995
	£m	£m	£m
Fixed assets and investments	1,111.0	1,032.2	1,064.2
Current assets less current liabilities	(135.9)	(139.9)	(135.8)
Long term liabilities and provisions	(168.5)	(170.8)	(170.0)
Minority interests	-	(0.1)	-
Share capital and reserves	806.6	721.4	778.4
Net borrowings	72.2	65.1	102.0
Gearing	9.0%	9.0%	13.1%

GROUP CASH FLOW STATEMENT (UNAUDITED)

	6 months to 30 September 1995	Year to 31 March 1995	Year to 31 March 1995
	£m	£m	£m
Net cash inflow from operating activities	116.4	99.9	215.5
Net cash (outflow) from returns on investments and servicing of finance	(38.2)	(4.6)	(57.8)
Tax paid	(4.6)	(6.8)	(37.1)
Net cash (outflow) from investing activities	(44.3)	(42.2)	(108.6)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from financing	1.0	(134.7)	(133.7)
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	29.3	(88.4)	(121.7)

NOTES ON THE HALF-YEAR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. Interim Financial Statements

These interim financial statements have been prepared on the basis of accounting policies consistent with those set out in the Company's Directors' Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 1995. The information shown for the year ended 31 March 1995 does not constitute statutory accounts within the meaning of section 240 of the Companies Act 1985 and has been extracted from the full financial statements for the year ended 31 March 1995 filed with the Registrar of Companies. The report of the Auditors on these financial statements was unqualified.

2. Dividends

The interim dividend of 4.75p (1994 4.34p) per ordinary share is payable on 20 March 1996 to those shareholders whose names appear on the register of members on 13 February 1996.

3. Earnings Per Share

Earnings per share has been calculated by dividing the retained profit for the period of £65.5M (1994 £25.2M) by 384,000 ordinary shares (1994 283,000), being the average number of ordinary shares in issue during the period.

There would be no significant dilution of earnings per share if the outstanding share options were exercised.



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Canberra intervenes in RTZ merger

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE
IN SYDNEY

THE Australian Government intervened yesterday in RTZ's proposed \$27 billion (£13 billion) merger with CRA, its 49 per cent owned Australian mining group, with an unexpected list of demands that it said were necessary to protect the national interest.

Ralph Willis, the Federal government's Treasurer, demanded that at least one-third of the board of the merged group must be Australians, and that CRA must be given control of the merged group's Latin American operations. He said: "The Government places significance on the wider involvement in world economic activity of Australia's mining companies."

The move was greeted with astonishment by the Australian financial community, which suggested that the Government may be attempting to win political points in the run-up to Federal election. One analyst said: "There is no precedent for it and no clear logical case for it. They have totally misunderstood the nature of the proposed deal."

CRA does not currently operate in Latin America, while RTZ has a 30 per cent stake in the world's largest copper mine, Escondido. After the merger the two companies planned to retain separate boards, but made up of the same people.

CRA shareholders are due to vote on the proposed merger with RTZ at an extraordinary meeting on Wednesday.

BICC wins \$320m rail contract

BY MARTIN BARROW

BICC, the cables and construction group, announced the award of a \$320 million rail contract in America for the electrification of Amtrak's northeast corridor between Boston, Massachusetts, and New Haven, Connecticut.

The project will be undertaken by Balfour Beatty Construction and Balfour Kilpatrick, the group's electrical engineering company. The two Balfour Beatty companies will complete 50 per cent of the work, amounting to \$160 million, with the remainder falling to their joint venture partner, Mass Electric Construction, of the US.

The contract is for the design, supply, installation and testing of a 150mph overhead system, together with substations and switching stations, auxiliary cabling, and five moveable bridge arrangements. The 576-mile railroad is mainly double track. The target completion date for the project is June 1999.

M&G profits hit by exceptional costs

M&G, Britain's largest independent unit trust group with nearly £14 billion under management, has unveiled a 15 per cent fall in annual profits to £52 million after taking exceptional costs into account. The exceptional costs related to new computer systems (£14.8 million) and a head office move (£4.1 million), without which pre-tax profits would have remained broadly unchanged over 1994. Operating profit, before exceptional costs, from unit and investment trusts and institutional business fell to £35.4 million from £38.4 million.

Administration expenses, excluding exceptional items, rose by 7.9 per cent to £25.6 million due to investment in technology and the cost of bringing fund management salaries into line with industry standards. David Morgan, group managing director of M&G, which raised its final dividend 1p to 18p, said: "Sales of our investment products, while down on last year's record levels, were still the second highest the group has ever achieved."

Tempos, page 24

NBC-Microsoft venture

NBC and Microsoft are to be equal partners in two joint ventures providing 24-hour cable television news and an online service. Microsoft will invest \$220 million over the next five years for its stake in the cable television venture, which will make its debut within six months on NBC's America's Talking cable channel, the companies said. Earlier, in Hong Kong, Bill Gates, Microsoft chairman, said the joint venture will include interactive news on the Internet as well as 24-hour broadcast news. Gates said the project may not provide any money for five to six years, but the two companies had decided to proceed anyway.

Trading slide at Acatos

ACATOS & HUTCHESON, the edible oils and fats manufacturing company, suffered a decline in profits to £7.6 million before tax from £14.2 million in the year to October 1, after a deterioration in trading in most areas. Acquisitions made in late 1994, both resulted in losses. The Co-op margarine and oils business proved costly to relocate and prices difficult to renegotiate, the company said; although these problems were now being resolved. Earnings fell to 5.5p a share from 30.3p. The total dividend is unchanged at 9p a share, with a maintained final payment of 5.5p due April 9. The shares fell 43p to 225p.

Burford buys eight sites

BURFORD HOLDINGS, the property investment company, has acquired a portfolio of eight freehold commercial properties from Scottish Widows for £48.75 million in cash, including costs. The reversionary portfolio generates a net annual rental income of about £3.4 million. Its total area for letting is about 285,000 sq ft. The major property is the Covent Garden Museum block in central London. The portfolio includes the Manor House office building in Soho Square, west London. The other properties are in Norwich, Glasgow, Exeter, Romford and Bournemouth.

Intercare edges ahead

INTERCARE GROUP, the medical products and mobility company, is holding the total dividend at 3.5p a share for the year to October 31 after returning profits little changed at £2.48 million before tax, compared with £2.33 million previously. Earnings were 5.3p a share (5.5p). The final dividend is unchanged at 2.8p a share, due April 5. Turnover improved to £45.23 million, compared with £44.34 million. Latest pre-tax profits included a net £549,000 surplus from disposals and restructuring. The shares rose 2p to 55p.

CRT turnover rises

CRT GROUP, the recruitment, training and multimedia company, increased profits to £1.75 million before tax from £1.29 million, reflecting a rise in turnover to £48.1 million from £29.2 million during the six months to the end of October. Earnings were 1.71p a share (1.42p), and the interim dividend is increased to 0.925p a share from 0.85p, payable June 19. The shares fell 2p to 116p. Profits for the full year will again be heavily weighted to the second half. Karl Chapman, chief executive, said that the company is well placed commercially and financially.

TEN

it's ALL or nothing

ZERO

LAPHROAIG
no half measures.

UNIT TRUST PRICES 27

UNIT TRUST PRICES 27

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

[illegible]



THEATRE 1

The Donmar's new staging of Sondheim's *Company* tones down the urban angst



THEATRE 2

Jane Austen is brought to life, at some length, in the one-woman show *My Solitary Elegance*

THE TIMES ARTS



MUSIC 1

On the 25th anniversary of Barbirolli's death, the LPO and Barenboim pay tribute



MUSIC 2

... while the Philharmonia and Rozhdestvensky surge through a programme of Russian epics

THEATRE: Sondheim's anti-marriage musical mellow; reviews from the Fringe

Finding bliss in blisters

Company
Donmar Warehouse

Stephen Sondheim is supposed to feel about marriage the way crustacea feel about being boiled in water or pickled in formaldehyde. Certainly, the current revival of *A Little Night Music* at the National leaves that impression, for its main characters are a husband frustrated by his wife's frigidity and a wife destroyed by her husband's infidelities. Yet here is a slightly earlier musical on the same theme which I recall as the most jaundiced Sondheim ever created, and suddenly it seems affirmative, even upbeat. What has changed since 1972 — the show, me, the presentation, or the American zeitgeist?

All, probably. Sondheim and his librettist, George Furth, appear to have done some adding, subtracting and quiet mellowing. I did not hear the exchange in which Robert, the indecisive bachelor at the centre of *Company*, asked one of his girlfriends if she knew any happy couples, and she dryly replied: "I know both, and they're both divorced." Moreover, Sam Mendes's chamber production strikes me as warmer, gentler and more kindly than Hal Prince's original.

Gloom phalanges of wives and husbands no longer pose like waxworks beneath the grey-steel scaffolding of a set like a high-tech prison. That wonderful song about urban stress, *Another Hundred People*, remains in place; but there is far less emphasis on New York's lonely canyons. You could no longer say, as Sondheim once did, that the show "compares contemporary marriage and the island of Manhattan". Almost everything occurs in a barish loft with walkways above and brightly coloured squares flashing behind, and much seems to be happening in the head of its owner, Adrian Lester's humiliated Robert.

But the greatest change has happened outside the theatre. In 1972 marriage was more the norm, and a writer who suggested it was often unhappy and always nerve-racking seemed cynical. Now we make fewer marriages and take their failure more for granted, so a writer who suggests that some may have their pluses seems oddly optimistic. *Company* is inspecting much the same bottle, but time has made it look half-full instead of half-empty.

Mendes's revival delivers less of a kick, then, but is hardly sentimental. There is something sinister and menacing about Robert's married chums as they enter chanting his name at the start of the surprise party they are throwing for his 35th birthday. Nor are his subsequent encounters very encouraging to a chap with doubts about breakfast-table bliss. Competition, deceit, games-playing, childishness all clearly have their place in modern wedlock.

Robert finds himself stopping a half-serious karate bout between Clive Rowe's Harry and Rebecca Front's Sarah. He mawkishly congratulates Clare Burt's Susan and Gareth Snook's Peter on their happiness, only to find they are about to divorce. He watches Sheila Gish's much-married Joanne getting aggressively

EVERYBODY loves Jane Austen. These days her novels, as seen on television, are bonneted blockbusters. Her satirised sillies and romantic heroines are a dramatist's joy. But what about the authoress herself? A staged life of Austen is not so easy. We do not know a great deal about this essentially retiring woman who published anonymously and never married, remembered by one of her nieces as "very absent indeed". Her beloved sister Cassandra, who drew the only (and hardly consummate) portrait we have, carefully destroyed her most revealing letters.

My Solitary Elegance, the actress Judith French's depiction of the authoress, is a theatrically modest affair. Indeed, this being a one-woman show, French's Austen is so solitary that we find her conversing with prerecorded



Amy (Sophie Thompson), Robert (Adrian Lester) and April (Hannah James) in the revival of *Company*

drunk and Sophie Thompson's Amy deciding she cannot go to the altar with her oppressively affectionate long-time lover, Michael Simkins's Paul.

Sondheim's brash, bold harmonies are sometimes allowed to overwhelm his even more brilliant lyrics; but not here. Thompson's panicky paean to the awfulness of being adored sums up the show's tone and thrust. Here and elsewhere Sondheim emerges as the bard of emotional ambivalence. Marriage is limiting, fulfilling, a denial of freedom, a triumph over loneliness. It's being "scared she's drifting away and scared she'll stay", it's "the concerts you enjoy together, the children you destroy together", and much, much more.

Robert's friends add to the confusion by envying him his bachelor fun, attacking him as immature, praising and rubbishing his girlfriends, and trying to sleep with him. After all that, his last-gasp conversion to marriage is in danger of seeming trite, and did so in 1972. But a splendidly hesitant new song called *Marry Me a Little* prepares the way, and Lester's robust delivery of the final number takes him home. He wants "someone to need me too much, someone to know me too well, someone to pull me up short, someone to put me through hell". It is the right conclusion to a vastly enjoyable evening.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Austen under the bonnet

My Solitary Elegance
New End, NW3

acquaintances. Austen's father, the Rev George Austen, is heard clumping about inside the loudspeaker to boot.

Still French, far prettier than Cassandra's sketch, is perky animated, cocking an ironic eyebrow and scribbling away with her quill as she reads from Austen's writings. The piece is biographically illuminating, charting Aus-

ten's life from her childhood in the Hampshire village of Steventon, through her early ballroom flirtations to acceptance of spinsterhood, then literary success and a regrettably early death.

French's sparkily amused Austen makes more sense than the picture of an embittered maiden aunt suggested by some literary historians, though her performance is too smilingly cute for Austen's sharpest quips and she should surely faze out the childish tattle after the early scenes. French's enactment of Austen's mock-Gothic heroes for-

ever gasping their last is charmingly funny, even if further down the line Austen's supposedly sad end teeters on the risible as our own Jane starts rasping between sub-clauses, regular as clockwork.

The piece, at more than two hours, is too long by half and its snipster structure does not build to a satisfactory finish. But the extracts from Austen's literary juvenilia and surviving correspondence are refreshing and sparklingly witty, including an adolescent playlet in which drawing-room manners go to the dogs when guests outnumber chairs. A snapper reworking of French's frequently entertaining script, perhaps in scenic National Trust surrounds rather than a black box studio, might be attended with very little fatigue.

KATE BASSETT

Name your own Christmas poison

Dinner with the Borgias/ Croydon
Santa Stole my Giro/ Old Red Lion

not simply because its cast have funnier things to say and do but because they are cheerier and more likeable.

Carney's story offers generous scope for individual display. We are in a television studio back in 1974 where a naïf show called *Mr and Mrs* is being rehearsed. A villain, plotting revenge against the creepy presenter, disguises himself as Santa Claus, and it is a mark of the casual plotting that the story would scarcely be altered if he dressed up as Guy Fawkes or the Queen of the May. Paranormal interference in the mystery booth brings Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim into the present day, soon followed by a camp Dr Watson, whose nickname for his

detective friend — the sleuth from the booth — is Shirley.

People start disappearing, chiefly because they have to stride off, change costume and return as those who are searching for them. The acting is clever but wayward, and some eccentric music cues in Ken McClymont's production require the cast to become quick-thinking scriptwriters.

Jamie Roberts and Jay Simpson are winningly winsome as the Cratchits, their sexual exploits sparking off several indecent jokes, though only one about crutches, and we are given an absurd dialogue between two glum Scouse electricians made up entirely of lines from Beatles songs. A drink or two before-

hand would aid enjoyment.

Sex is also what the Borgias are after, down in Croydon, but they are not so funny about it. Cesare fancies one of Leonardo da Vinci's daughters, the Pope fancies the other one, and Lucrezia has the hots for Machiavelli (Kevin Williams). This sounds as if the complications could be fruitful, especially as one actress plays both the Misses da Vinci, but it does not turn out that way. In his Christmas show last year, Smiles used the same device of a protagonist frantically trying to avoid death and sundry maidens, but his touch there was defter. Invention this time is ponderous, and the *Last Supper* painting jokes were funnier in the John Cleese skit they are lifted from. Ted Craig directs. Drink copiously beforehand.

JEREMY KINGSTON

LONDON ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

The gift of great touch

LPO/Barenboim
Festival Hall

LAST Wednesday's emotional return to the London concert platform by Daniel Barenboim brought more than it had promised. He played not one, but two piano concertos, and conducted the first from the advertised programme (no Zubin Mehta, no Elgar First Symphony) that few in a packed Festival Hall seemed to mind. The occasion was the London Philharmonic's Sir John Barbirolli Memorial Concert, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the great conductor's death, and there could have been few more fitting soloists: Barbirolli made concerto recordings with the young Barenboim and encouraged his conducting career, something Barenboim always recalls with affectionate gratitude.

But hearing Barenboim play Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 3 again made one regret some of the time this most natural of musicians has spent on the podium. He remains a consummate

pianist, and the only unsatisfying part of this performance was the orchestral opening, which sounded too deliberate under Barenboim's fiftful conducting. Although he remained alert to the orchestra throughout — flicking directions at the players when even the shortest of rests gave him a free hand — once absorbed in the solo part, he exuded calm musical authority. He conjured up an impressive range of pianistic colour, from the shimmering arpeggios that follow the first-movement cadenza to the

playful brightness of the Rondo. In the Beethoven, at least, he appeared to have lost none of his touch.

In Brahms's demanding Second Piano Concerto, he was less secure but he caught the rapt intensity of the slow movement and graceful humour of the finale. The real problem here lay with the conducting of Lawrence Foster. No Brahmsian, he missed the work's dramatic sweep and found little of its poignancy.

Barbirolli himself was not well served by the dusting off of his *Elizabethan Suite* as the concert's opening work. His arrangements of Byrd's *The Earl of Salisbury's Pavane* and four pieces from *The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* may have been of pioneering interest when they were made in 1941, but one does not have to be a militant authenticist to find them feeble now. Foster and the London Philharmonic strings and horns gave the suite an amiable airing.

JOHN ALLISON

Sure feet on the steppes

Philharmonia/
Rozhdestvensky
Festival Hall

THE Philharmonia's end-of-year celebratory concert was loud and long. Scheherazade luxuriated in her tale-telling, if not 1,001 of them, then almost as many: Prokofiev's colossal of a Second Piano Concerto bestrode the second half; and the Polovitsi celebrated their invasion of the entire Russian steppes — as well as the culmination of the Philharmonia's fiftieth anniversary season — with their great sequence of dances.

And over all this monumentalism ruled the master of the eloquent calligraphy of conducting, Gennadi Rozhdestvensky. The clarity and wit of his baton make his concerts as unfailingly pleasurable to watch as to listen to. Every jewelled colour in Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic suite Sche-

herazade was touched into place by its tip as if an exquisite lacquer box were being decorated.

Like her husband, the pianist Viktoria Postnikova also knows how to contain music's might in a taut, undemonstrative frame. From the piano's early distant while light, there was an almost imperceptible amassing of inner strength in the opening song of Prokofiev's Second Concerto. Delineated by the most precise, yet apparently effortless, placing of weight and measure, it grew to its mighty cadenza which, in

Postnikova's hands, spoke with all the individual voices of the orchestra itself.

The octave semiquavers which never cease their dance in the Scherzo were held in perfect equipoise with the orchestra's own soloists, before the lumbering grotesquerie of the Intermezzo, teased out with finely-toned muscle.

The Philharmonia Chorus was at last given its voice in the *Polovitsian Dances* from Borodin's *Prince Igor*. The sopranos were properly suspended on the wings of the wind; altos found dark Slavonic vowels they may well have never known they had; and the male cohorts of the Khan sang his praises with a lucid vigour of which the composer would have been proud.

HILARY FINCH

It's in the Bag!

K.d. lang
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CHOICE 1

Fairy-dust all round in a danced version of *Cinderella*

VENUE: Opens tomorrow at Sadler's Wells



CHOICE 2

Thomas Allen leads the carols in concert with the LSO

VENUE: On Sunday at the Barbican

THE TIMES ARTS



CHOICE 3

Diana Ross winds up the "greatest music party in the world"

VENUE: Sunday at the NEC in Birmingham



VISUAL ART

Hiding our heritage: how the National Gallery protected its treasures from the bombs

ROXY
NEW ALBUMS

In 1941 our finest paintings were put in an old slate mine. Isabel Carlisle reports

How the gallery went to war

The National Gallery has mounted an exhibition which must be a first — it has not a single painting in it. This is a documentary show about the gallery and its collection during the Second World War, a collection of photographs, news clippings and original letters about the time when the building became virtually pictureless.

The show also conjures up the appalling vision of what might have been the fate of the national collection. In May 1940, a gallery trustee suggested that the paintings should be transported to Canada by ship for safekeeping. But for Churchill's emphatic refusal — "Hide them in caverns and cellars, but not one picture shall leave this island" — and the reluctance of the director, Kenneth Clark, they could have ended up at the bottom of the Atlantic.

In August 1939 the gallery had closed its doors and sent the paintings to three secret sites in Wales and a private house in Gloucestershire. After the capitulation of France in May 1940, however, bombing was a threat even in Wales and, as a film shot in 1941 shows, six brick store-rooms were created in an old slate mine at Manod, above the Welsh village of Ffestiniog. The preparations took more than a year; the last painting was not put in store there until September 18, 1941.

Mines and country houses from here to Poland and Russia became repositories for war booty as well as national collections. Although this exhibition has confirmed itself to be a fascinating study of the National Gallery's paintings were among Hitler's choices for the Führer museum that he planned for Linz.

The gallery building itself was not turned over to government offices as had been



Canvases under canvas: pictures from the National Gallery are spirited away to their wartime refuge in North Wales

expected. Instead it became a focus for music and art in a city where both were strictly rationed. Lunchtime classical concerts took place every weekday, organised by the concert pianist Myra Hess. They brought a whole range of people into the gallery who would not necessarily have come to see the paintings in peacetime. "Tommyes in their uniform with their tin hats strapped on, old ladies with ear trumpets, musical students, civil servants, office boys, busy public men," as Clark put it.

So great was the reluctance to see the concerts end after the war that they continued until April 1946. The profitable lunch canteens set up to feed

the concert-goers seem to have inadvertently become the prototype of the museum café. Just as influential in shaping wartime attitudes to the gallery was the decision to bring back one masterpiece a month. Risking direct hits by daytime enemy action, this was displayed at the top of the entrance hall steps, and taken down each night to be stored in a bomb shelter. In his instructions to Manod to initiate the Picture of the Month scheme, Clark wrote: "People do not want to see Dutch painting or realistic painting of any kind; no doubt at the present time they are anxious to contemplate a nobler order of humanity. The two that have been most often asked for

are the El Greco *Agony in the Garden* and the Titian *Noli me tangere*. The Titian was the first to be shown. Bellini's *Agony in the Garden* brought 30,978 visitors over the five weeks it was on show, Botticelli's *Mars and Venus* 34,346. In addition, the gallery mounted a constantly changing display of works by war artists such as John Piper, Paul Nash, Stanley Spencer, Edward Ardizzone, Eric Ravilious and Graham Sutherland. There were exhibitions of modern art and one of French 19th-century painting.

What this exhibition does not convey is the fundamental change in public perception of the gallery that took place during the war years. Despite

the risks involved, the gallery had not neglected its public. Under the enlightened directorship of Clark it responded to the realisation that art mattered, and mattered especially in times of crisis. Apart from visitors to the exhibitions in the gallery, 824,000 people had attended the concerts. It is not too fantastic to suppose that the passions aroused four years ago by the architectural schemes proposed for the new Sainsbury Wing to the gallery have their roots in the great public affection the gallery attracted during the Second World War, and still commands today.

● The National Gallery and the Second World War is in Room 1 at the National Gallery until Feb 11

Warbling romance

the publicity, is basically conveyed through a highly romantic interpretation of that old repertoire. How old the melodies are is not clear, but these arrangements by Aidinian, Haroutounian and Komitas

consist of essentially late 19th-century harmonisations. The key figure in this national musical revival was Komitas (1869-1935), whose folksong settings formed the second half of the concert. These rather self-conscious pieces, often quite extended with contrasting

sections, drew the best singing from the choir under its conductor of more than 30 years, Channes Tchekidjian. Non-Western elements in the music were most apparent in the modal qualities of the melodies and certain vocal flourishes. These were heightened by the manner of singing. Its peculiar intensity derives from the combination of a pronounced vibrato and a strongly nasal resonance, heard at its best in the affecting solo by the bass Albert Khat-

chadurian. However, in the choral sections, the competing vibratos, especially of the sopranos, proved wearing on the ear, and failed to hide the woolly pitching of the lower voices.

Perhaps it is unfair to apply Western European ideals to a tradition that clearly has its roots further to the east. And there are those features commonly associated with Russian choirs which completely elude their Western counterparts: those gravelly basses; that unique, almost disembodied pianissimo; a sudden, snatched crescendo. Tchekidjian was especially keen on this last, and it has to be said that the attention given his every gesture by the choir was extraordinary by any standard.

TESS KNIGHTON

LONDON

CINDERELLA: Matthew Hart's fairy-dust inspired production for London City Ballet opens tomorrow. The Royal Ballet's dancer steps into his fair for detailed and whimsical choreography, maintaining the theme of the tale in a classical style as some might like. Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, EC1 (0171-733 6000). Sat, 2.30 and 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat and Sun, 2.30 and 7.30pm.

MUSIC AND DANCE: The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra opens the weekend at the Barbican, with Yutaka Yamane conducting and pianist John L. Richard. Tickets: £10-£100. Barbican, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kris Anderson

ORCHESTRA AND GILIAN HAMPREY'S Winter Serenade features on Sunday. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra opens the weekend at the Barbican, with Yutaka Yamane conducting and pianist John L. Richard. Tickets: £10-£100. Barbican, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981,



POP 1

Revisit the early life of Bryan Ferry on an epic Roxy Music compilation



POP 2

...or imbibe some of the yuletide spirit seeping from Luther Vandross and company

THE TIMES POP ARTS



POP 3

Mindless it may be, but the product of the Eternal label is bringing home the bacon



POP 4

Annie Lennox's *Medusa* is Caitlin Moran's choice for 1995's worst record - but which was the best?

Roxy Music, this was your life

NEW ALBUMS

ROXY MUSIC

The Thrill of It All (Virgin 8 40970; four discs)
DECORATED with those glossy images of glamorous women that were Roxy Music's visual trademark, *The Thrill of It All* is a 67-track retrospective which does the group's memory proud. Their output was variable and their influence not altogether benign, but when they emerged in 1972 with their futuristic pop-rock songs and arch, space-cockatoo image, Roxy Music played a role in revitalising rock during the grey aftermath of the hippy era.

Disc One incorporates most of their groundbreaking first two albums, *Roxy Music* and *For Your Pleasure*, and, although dogged by a desperately unfashionable drum sound, songs such as *Ladytron* and *In Every Dream Home a Heartache* retain their icy charm.

With the departure of sonic maestro Brian Eno in 1973, however, the group lost an element of strategic weirdness, and singer Bryan Ferry started to become a caricature of himself. Disc Two - which draws together most of *Stranded*, *Country Life* and *Siren* - finds him schmoozing away in French on the majestic *A Song for Europe* and gurgling in German on the ludicrously overwrought *Bitter-Sweet*.

These comic indulgences are mitigated by gems such as *Prairie Rose* and the timeless *Love is the Drug*, but Disc Three, which rounds up the string of albums they released after re-forming in 1978 (*Manifesto*, *Flesh + Blood* and *Avalon*), is a weary triumph of style over content. The ragbag of B-sides, remixes and non-album singles that makes up Disc Four will be of limited appeal (apart from *Virginia Plain*, *Pjamasrama* and *Jealous Guy*) to all but the most ardent of Roxy completists.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Even Santa Gets the Blues (Pointblank/Virgin VPB 28)
LUTHER VANDROSS
This is Christmas (Epic/LV Records 481312)
ALAN JACKSON
Honky Tonk Christmas (Arista/BMG 07822 18736)
ALTHOUGH these three albums each attempt to give the Christmas theme a different musical spin - blues, soul and country respectively - they all fall back on the tried and tested in the end.

Even Santa Gets the Blues features B.B. King, Charles Brown, Isaac Hayes, Johnny Winter and others bringing various shades of deep-voiced melancholy and/or cheer to



The "futuristic pop-rock songs" of Roxy Music brightened the early 1970s: now you can follow their innovative career on four new CDs

the party, but also finds space at the table for a jazz-tinged version of Irving Berlin's *White Christmas* by Hadda Brooks, the 79-year-old "Queen of the Boogie".

Luther Vandross turns in an impeccably polished set with slick, up-tempo arrangements of *My Favourite Things*, *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* and a rousing gospel choir-assisted finale of *O Come All Ye Faithful*.

For country star Alan Jackson, though, Christmas inevitably means more pain. "I want to thank you for this broken heart that I got/Merry Christmas girl, wherever in the world you are," he sings, mournfully but manfully, on the title track of *Honky Tonk Christmas*.

But among the tales of crying Santas and drunken daddies, Jackson has included a song of reassurance for the kids who live "way down South" where it doesn't snow. Taken at a sprightly canter and featuring

the unmistakable voices of Pinky and Perky (seriously), it's called *Santa's Gonna Come in a Pickup Truck*.

RAMPAGE

Priority One (Rampage/Almo Sounds ALMOCD005)

HAS there ever been an underground style of music that has taken so long to claw its way to the surface as jungle? Whole eras of musical

fashion seem to have come and gone since this rapidly pulsating bass and drum music was first heralded as the wave of the future.

Part of the problem - if that's what it is - is the dance community's fiercely protective attitude towards its hardcore favourites. London-based outfit Rampage were left in no doubt of their place in the scheme of things by a reviewer from one of the specialist magazines who warned

them: "We don't want you getting on *The Chart Show* with your Top Ten kids' TV tunes."

Rampage's crime is to have included a version of the catchy theme tune to *The Monkees*, albeit heavily vibed up with those skittery junglist beats, on their debut album, *Priority One*. A snatch of the *Godfather* theme is also pressed into service, briefly, before being steamrollered by the frenetic, pounding beat.

The rest of the album, however, is as uncompromisingly sparse and cut to the rhythmic bone as ever, with little variety or additional instrumentation and strictly no melodies that might interfere with the barrage of drum loops and subliminal bass patterns. Stark, modern and unrelenting, this is a good album of its kind, but lacks the vision to take jungle beyond its current narrow horizons.

DAVID SINCLAIR

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- 1 Robson & Jerome (RCA)
- 2 (What's the Story) Morning Glory? (Creation)
- 3 Made in Heaven (Parlophone)
- 4 Love Songs (Epic)
- 5 Something to Remember (MCA)
- 6 HiStory (A&M)
- 7 Different Class (Epic)
- 8 The Memory of Trees (WEA)
- 9 Life (East West)
- 10 Anthology 1 (Capitol)

© CN

Things that made me go 'Mmmm'

I am three weeks behind everyone else in the Records of the Year doodlings; but that was only because I was waiting to see if my Worst Album of the Year, nominated in January, was going to be overtaken for sheer gut-rotting tragedy by Roy "Chubby" Brown's *Take Fat and Party*. It wasn't. So *Medusa* by Annie Lennox, wherein everyone's favourite mouse-eared claaaarsy lady takes a machete to 12 of our best-loved tunes, still reigns over the very large pile of vinyl laundry waiting to be taken to the cleaners.

Having dispensed with the Worst, then, everything else falls smoothly into place as we head for the bright and bracing highgrounds of the Cool Stuff. Take *That Kicked off the year with Never Forget*,

age *Fandub's Grand Prix*, which escaped being morose thanks to some of the most glorious, soaring harmonies this side of the Beatles.

The Single of the Year, Pulp's *Common People*, resurrected the spirit of punk 17 years on, and dressed it in Crimpeane and just a soupçon of slap, and the triumphant album *Different Class* went straight in at No 1. The Boo Radleys reached gold status with *Wake Up!* - only fair, considering songwriter Martin Carr already has a back-catalogue that would turn Brian Wilson green with envy. Supergrass's album *I Should Coco* was singlehandedly responsible for the summer heatwave, and the rise of sales of Raleigh Chopper bikes after *Alright* hit No 1 in the



CAITLIN MORAN

singles chart pretty much demanded that we all be 11 years old again. Oasis waded in shortly afterwards with *What's the Story (Morning Glory?)*, which took us all the way up to the dizzying age of 17.

The Chemical Brothers' *Exit* was Tricky's *Madrugada*, trying to exhale serenity and beauty with every inhalation of confusion and dirt. Tricky were supporting P.J. Harvey at the time their album went straight in at No 2 - one of the best live bills this year, as P.J.'s *To Bring You My Love* deals with the same claustrophobia and longing for redemption and simplicity.

Delicatessen's *Skin Touching Water and Tinselticks* were Siamese twins albums - joined at the hip with a love of spoken-word theatrics; rumbling, sensuous bass; keening violins and heavily overloaded guitars. Every-one's forgotten McAlmont's *McAlmont*, but for love-lorn sensibilities the first side alone is worth the price of a bus ride over to your mate's to tape it. Similar heartstuck pop was on hand on Teen-

It happened on *Top of the Pops* last night, for the umpteenth time this year. Britain's venerable chart programme was turned into a giant party by two men looking like basketball hero Michael Jordan's teammates from the Chicago Bulls.

During 1995, the Illinois-raised Outthere Brothers have made themselves comfortable in the British charts. The new hit, with DJ Molella, *If You*

Euro-cheese makes for a better mousetrap

Paul Sexton meets the golden-eared boss of the chart-busting Eternal label

Wanna Party, is their latest call-and-response ditty with an infectiousness akin to the common cold and, according to some music lovers, about as much artistic value.

The Brothers have sold more than a million singles in Britain this year, among them

the chart-topping, all-yelling, all-thudding *Don't Stop (Wiggle Wiggle)* and *Boom Boom Boom*. Accessible? Football crowds now chant them, that's how accessible they are.

The Outthere are one of the prime assets of Eternal, a label run out of the giant WEA Records company. Eternal has enjoyed a remarkable 1995 all round, thanks not only to the Chicago twosome, but also

Corona, the Italy-based pop-dance group fronted by Brazilian singer Olga de Souza. Their new song, *I Don't Wanna Be A Star*, is set to become their fourth Top Ten single in just over a year, following *Baby Baby*, *Try Me Out* and their first hedonistic anthem, *The Rhythm of the Night*. Total till receipts for the Eternal label: another million-plus units and 50,000 copies of the Corona album.

Add another substantial hit with the club version of the Cranberries' *Zombie*, by A.D.A.M. featuring Amy, and an Eternal imprint on the current, career-reviving remix of *Everything But the Girl's Missing* (expected to pass sales of half-a-million this week), and one has a candidate for the title of biggest new label of the year - and all of it run by a fellow who used to have a spiv moustache and call himself Enrico Cadillac.

Eternal chief Steve Allen has learnt that the best response to the observations of the taste police about mindless Euro-pop is to point to the balance sheet. And yet Allen is an unlikely champion of such brazen populism. In the 1970s

and early 1980s, he was a member of the acclaimed Liverpool "art school pop" outfit Deaf School, and then of esteemed post-punk band the Original Mirrors. He even had success in Europe as a solo pop balladeer.

"I just gave people what they want really, it's very non-elitist," he says. "I'm not going to do anything underground because I've got no interest in feeding that snobbery. In England, everyone calls my stuff 'Euro-cheese', but I don't just do Euro-cheese. The Outthere Brothers are from Chicago."

So he does Chicago-cheese as well. But where Allen differs from those who frown at his common touch is in believing that instant accessibility in music does not signify sellout. "Dance is the great communicator. Everyone's dancing to the same records all over the world. The EC's a

bigger market than America, and then there's Japan to think of as well. There's a lot further I can go with this thing."

There is a wounded artistic sensibility here as well. On the piano in his office, Allen demonstrates the classical chords on which much of his stock-in-trade is based. "I put out a brilliant record by Cleo and Marcus, *I've Got the Music in Me*. The guy from the group was in here, I said 'I love the chords in it', and he said: 'Oh yes, it's Chopin'. He's from Turin, he's a brilliant musician."

Controversy over explicit lyrics on the Outthere Brothers album caused it to be withdrawn by WEA, and replaced last Monday by a new "family" version. "It's not my job to tell an artist what the content of his stuff should be," Allen says. "We can't be censors. But we're not here to release nice,

friendly music either. If you did that, you wouldn't ever have had Elvis Presley; he was outrageous and controversial. I'm not putting the Outthere Brothers in his bracket, but I think if you sign it, you've got to go with it.

"There were certain things

on that album that I wouldn't want my kid listening to, although at six he's probably a bit too young to be able to pick up the gist. But [the Brothers] aren't making records for kids, they're making club records for grown-ups."

● The singles *If You Wanna Party*, by Molella featuring the Outthere Brothers and *I Don't Wanna Be a Star* by Corona, as well as *Party Album*, by the Outthere Brothers, are available on Eternal/WEA

MMC INVITES EVIDENCE ON LONDON AIRPORT CHARGES

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission is to investigate the maximum airport charges that should be allowed over the five year period starting on 1 April 1997 at the three London airports owned by BAA plc, namely Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. The MMC also has to consider whether any of these airports has acted against the public interest in any of its airport-related activities since the last investigation in 1990.

The MMC would like to hear from interested parties, in writing, by 12 January 1996, if possible. Anyone wishing to submit evidence, or to receive a copy of the full terms of reference, should write to: The Reference Secretary (Airports), Monopolies and Mergers Commission, New Court, 48 Carey Street, London WC2A 2JT, quoting ref TMS5.

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EDUCATION

Head teachers' thoughts on classroom danger — and a view of the brave man who died for his pupils



The American nightmare: in the United States, security men on campus are now commonplace — but British schools must beware of turning themselves into prisons, says John Dunford

Schools on the front line

Why is it, asked a head teacher recently, "that whenever a dog comes on to my school playing field, it is always a rottweiler?" This was said by the head of a successful 600-pupil comprehensive school in a very deprived urban area of Teesside, speaking in a debate at the summer council meeting of the Secondary Heads Association, of which Philip Lawrence was a distinguished member until his death last week outside his school in Maidala Vale.

We all have dogs on our playing fields and we all have social problems, to a greater or lesser extent, in our schools. But the point which the head was making was that there are schools in which all the problems are hugely magnified by the social and physical situation.

In the past two years, the Secondary Heads Association has become increasingly aware of the size of the problems facing schools in the most difficult areas of the country, not only in large cities such as London and

The problems of violence and crime inside the school gates are only a symptom of the wider ills of society, says John Dunford

Manchester, but in smaller towns and cities such as Middlesbrough, Grimsby, Derby and Reading. They are in the outer estates of these towns, as well as in inner cities. In these schools, rotters are not the only intruders to worry head teachers and their staff — motorbikes, joyriders in stolen cars, angry parents and, worst of all, drug dealers have all been reported on school sites many times. Baseball bats and knives are frequently carried by the intruders.

In these circumstances, head teachers and their colleagues are called upon to show physical courage in dealing with many of the situations which arise. Few interview panels include this in their criteria for appointments to headship, yet that is the quality which Mr Lawrence showed last week.

In the past, people have taken for granted that teachers will break up

fight and rescue pupils in distress — perhaps the dangers will now be more readily recognised.

These problems are not created by the schools. Indeed, schools are almost always relative havens of calm in the lives of young people. This is particularly so when the pupils live in deprived urban areas, where schools have replaced the police and social services as the first port of call for families with major problems. Schools work closely with these agencies, but the speed of response of the police and social services is limited by the other calls on their time. If Mr Lawrence had dialled 999 instead of dealing with the situation himself, the attack on the 15-year-old pupil outside St George's School would certainly have ended by the time the police arrived.

We have to distinguish between situations which occur on school premises and those which happen outside. The shooting of a girl pupil at Hall Garth School, Middlesbrough, in 1994 highlighted the vulnerability of school premises, with their multiple entrances and lack of security. After this tragedy, many schools — including St George's — introduced extra security measures, including visitor passes, exterior fencing and cameras. With a thorough security audit and adequate resources, schools can combat almost all intruders, although no school wants to resemble a prison.

The killing of Mr Lawrence was not a matter of school security, but a symptom of a much wider problem, in which violence has encouraged violence, and where young people feel the need to carry weapons in order to demonstrate their masculinity or because they want to protect themselves from others whom they know

to be carrying them. If such weapons are brought into school, the situation is dealt with according to the rules and sanctions of the school. Incidents which happen outside school, however, are more difficult because schools cannot be divorced from the problems which are endemic in their local communities and which, all too often, spill over into the school and its immediate neighbourhood.

We must hope that Mr Lawrence's death draws the public's attention to the problems highlighted by the head teachers of schools in deprived communities. Then it will be seen that the problems are not confined to the schools, but are symptomatic of the worst situations which are developing in our society.

They are not someone else's problems, but will affect all of us if they remain unsolved. Solutions will be effective only if they take this into account.

● The author is president of the Secondary Heads Association and head of Durham Johnston Comprehensive School, Durham City.

'One of the most gifted teachers of his time'



Philip Lawrence: iconoclastic

Philip Lawrence, the murdered London headmaster, will be badly missed in the state sector. However, no less forgotten will be his earlier outstanding teaching in the private sector.

In the early 1970s, I was lucky enough to have Mr Lawrence as my English teacher at St Benedict's, Ealing, an independent boys school. In his mid-twenties at the time, he was surely one of the most gifted teachers of his generation. He was an iconoclast who made traditional teaching methods look outmoded.

There was a quality of the artist about the man. His gait was sprightly, his smile quick. He dressed flamboyantly and had angular handwriting which spiralled into what graphologists call the spiritual zone.

In our class, Mr Lawrence introduced literature to 14-year-old boys as if he had just discovered it. He read dramatically from D.H. Lawrence and Dylan Thomas, slipping into a high-pitched voice to represent female characters. He paced the room and made faces to play every part.

By focusing repeatedly on the same

Alexander Davidson recalls inspirational English lessons given by Philip Lawrence

extracts of literature and exploring their meaning passionately with his pupils, Mr Lawrence cultivated in us an exciting literary palate. He related literature to our limited experience and so made it meaningful.

But teaching creative writing was Mr Lawrence's forte. He strove to cultivate excellence as well as self-expression. The standards were always the great writers but he offered further stimuli. In one poignant lesson, he read out a story in which flowers featured as a metaphor for love in its complexity. He then waved in the air a few fresh daffodils he had brought in. Suddenly he grimaced and crushed the flowers in his hand. He laughed and said: "Write about what that puts into your head."

Cliches were not tolerated. In one lesson, he asked pupils for examples of similes and wrote them on the board. He then crossed through the lot in a flash. "Let's start again and

make the similes original," he announced. He also had a great teacher's knack of focusing on a tiny matter until it was thoroughly understood. He once spent a whole lesson explaining what irony meant and how it differed from sarcasm.

In another innovation he once combined our English group with another for a "mixed ability" class. It was run by Mr Lawrence and his future wife Frances.

So focused was his engagement with his pupils that he had no problem with troublemakers. Arguments were usually part of the educational experience. His lessons were, like life, unpredictable. This brought out reactions in his pupils which startled even themselves.

As an experimental teacher, he attracted his share of criticism. For instance, some parents were disappointed that he did not make pupils

read Shakespeare in great chunks or learn poems by heart. But not everybody understood that he was doing something more valuable. He taught his pupils not just a love of literature, but also how to read it critically and how to think.

Doubtless his talents cried out for wider expression, and it is a truism that teachers of his quality are needed in the state sector where he eventually made his career. But great teachers are no less valuable in private schools. The better independent schools like Ampleforth College where he was educated, or St Benedict's where he taught, employ many good teachers.

Such teachers can afford to be more intellectual and self-indulgent than most of their state school counterparts. They can concentrate on educating and are unhampered by, for instance, violence.

If state education is to keep or attract teachers of Philip Lawrence's calibre, it must provide a good, safe working environment. In the aftermath of his murder, it now has farther to go than ever.

Spectre of '68 haunts France

Mary Follain reports from Paris on the growing militancy of university students



Masks of protest: workers like these are being supported by students

erous grants. M Bayrou soon disappointed them by postponing any decision until next June.

Christian Forestier, the Director of Higher Education, acknowledges that in the present climate of cuts in public spending this can only mean a redistribution of the budget now available for student support. The present system, with its emphasis on tax allowances to parents and too few direct grants, benefits better-off families rather than poor students themselves.

M Chirac also promised to improve student conditions. "Wider access to a university education," he acknowledged, "has been accompanied by profound inequalities for students both in their conditions of study and their chances of success."

Forty per cent of French school-leavers now go into

higher education. Intake began soaring as far back as 1980 and over the past five years each university has had to absorb an average 50 per cent increase.

The French Government has no intention of limiting

student numbers, even though resources have not kept pace over the years and teaching posts have been cut back. France spends only £4,000 per student, compared with the UK's £10,000.

Lionel Jospin, the former

shipwreck in which only the best swimmers survive.

Much of the students' misery stems from their refusal to accept selection. In 1986, when M Chirac was Prime Minister, Alain Devaquet, his Higher Education Minister, tried to

introduce it. He also wanted to give the too-tightly controlled universities a little of the autonomy they desperately need. But students, fearing this would only worsen existing inequalities, brought down the Government.

The students appear to be their own worst enemies. They rush to demonstrate at even a hint of change, often blocking vital reform. M Bayrou's present caution is based on bitter experience. Only last January, the mere publication of a report calling for the creation of regional colleges to be closely linked to industry and local authorities added fuel to student demonstrations. M Bayrou hurriedly disbanded it.

But M Chirac said in May that the first two years of degree courses must co-operate with industry and local authorities.

Students are surely not wrong to put the emphasis squarely on resources and teaching posts. It is hard to see how their conditions of study can improve as long as the French continue to run their universities on what is, in comparison with the UK, a shoestring.

Why do socks always end up alone?

Jessica Gorst-Williams on the problem of lost property

End of term looms, and the main thing on many parents' minds is not their child's report, but that missing sock or the bottom half of a tracksuit that he has been doing without for weeks. Lost property is a perennial bugbear for schools. For parents, kitting out children is expensive and time-consuming enough without finding that the blazers, gumshields, football boots and flutes a pupil was seen off with on the first bright morning of the academic year are now dallying in a smelly heap in an out-of-the-way corner of school.

The problem is biggest in large day schools where the comings and goings make it difficult to be sure whether something has been lost or stolen.

It is least worrying in boarding schools, which often act on the premise that belongings are not missing, they are just circulating. Mark Pyper, the Headmaster of Gordonstoun, says: "We work on the principle that everyone comes with full kit at the beginning of term. Then things tend to get borrowed and shuffled around. So long as each child has the right quota of items, even if they are not the precise ones they started with, that is no great problem. In a boarding school things usually turn up."

At Benenden, the girls' boarding school, stray marked belongings go into a series of boxes, one for each house, and are then repatriated to house rooms once a day. Any anonymous item must be collected by the owner in person.

At Sevenoaks School, in Kent, prefects used to supervise a mountain of smelly, sometimes damp belongings, trying to help younger pupils to find their erstwhile gear. Parents put off by "lost property's" reputation would shrug off their losses and buy new.

Then, at the end of last summer term, two people spent five days dealing every named article on a

computer database and depositing them into alphabetically listed plastic garden bins.

"Now the new system is just about off the starting blocks," says Stephen Stares, the School Marshal. "A dozen or so articles arrive each morning and are quickly processed. Information is sent around the houses and the property in general is collected."

This presupposes clothes are marked. Unmarked, unclaimed belongings not collected by half term or the end of term go to the school's parents' association shop if they are on the school clothing list. If not, in common with many other schools, they go to a local charity shop.

Any parents prepared to brave their child's embarrassment and use their dowsing instincts around a school are likely to double the odds of finding missing gear.

Careful marking of clothes with the child's name more than quadruples the chances of recovery. People have been sewing on Cash's name-tapes since the 1870s. The tapes have a 25-year guarantee and these days are so universal they even come in Chinese, Japanese and Russian. Some thrifty parents with more than one child have different initials on either side of the surname.

Schools seldom accept liability for losses, and household contents policies will not pay out for possessions missing at school unless they feature in the all-risks section. Even then, says Roger Pridemore, of Royal Insurance: "Anyone who keeps on claiming may well find the insurer gets fed up and asks for a higher premium on all the belongings of the household, or increases the excess. You have to ask if this is worthwhile just for the belongings of one absent-minded child."

Some schools have bulk insurance to which parents can contribute. Otherwise Holmwoods, of Haywards Heath, Sussex, offers individual policies.



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Mathis finds the faith to face threat of Tyson

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT IN PHILADELPHIA

IF YOU were to line up Buster Mathis Jr alongside six other heavyweights and ask a non-boxing man to pick out Mike Tyson's opponent here tomorrow, you could bet your life he would not point at Mathis.

Mathis does not look the part. He appears an overweight middleweight, being just one inch taller than Tyson, at 6ft. A dog collar rather than boxing gloves might seem more appropriate on the reserved United States Boxing Association heavy-weight champion. If he had enough money, he would have given up boxing to spread the word of Jesus. His mother is a Jehovah's Witness, as was his father Buster Mathis Sr, who died last September.

"If I had Tyson's money I would be gone like a shot," Mathis said. "I feel sorry for Tyson. He's got all the money and recognition and he doesn't seem happy."

Still a bachelor at 25, Mathis lives with his mother in Wyoming, Michigan, and prefers to concentrate on his studies to gain a BSc in Computer Science than on boxing. "I'm not your average kid who has come up from the streets looking for his next meal. My mother is a Jehovah's Witness and my father was a Witness, too. I am not a dedicated Witness but I like learning about the Almighty."

"I am an honest human being. I don't smoke, don't drink and I have no car. I take my money and put it in the bank and invest it. I buy no fancy clothes. There's no lady in my life. No one wants me. I live with my mum, Joan, and most definitely I'm Mama's boy, big time."



Mathis: taught by father

father was. Boxing was never the topic of conversation around the Mathis household even though his father was a top contender in the golden days of Ali and Frazier and boxed with them. "I found out about my father from neighbours and by rifling through clippings about his fight with Frazier," Mathis said.

In short, Buster Mathis Jr is too much of a nice guy to be in the position to be brutalised by Tyson at the Spectrum tomorrow. Yet, by a curious irony, Mathis has learnt the same boxing philosophy as Tyson. He was taught by his father, who was trained by Cus D'Amato, as was Tyson. When he asked his father to teach him boxing, Mathis Sr said: "Son, you can play football, you can play baseball, but remember, you can't play boxing."

Mathis took this advice seriously. Under his father's tutelage he practised boxing for a full year before even attempting to spar. He started boxing as an amateur in 1980, won the Golden Gloves and a few other amateur titles, turned professional in 1991 and is unbeaten in 22 contests. On his record he has names such as Levi Billups, Mike Dixon, Mike Hunter, Alex Garcia and Riddick Bowe. The bout with Bowe was indecisive, as it was declared a no-contest after Bowe hit him while he was still on the floor.

Mathis is trained by Joey Fariello, also of the D'Amato school and a close friend of the boxer's father. "My father told me to stay with Joey," Mathis said. "My father couldn't read or write, but he could read people."

Even though Mathis does not have a punch to deter Tyson, Fariello says, technically, he is as accomplished as other heavyweights and can look after himself — though he did not say for how long. Although Mathis has been given no chance, Tyson would do well to remember another Buster in his life — Douglas. Just as Mathis lost his father recently, Douglas, too, lost his mother just before his sensational victory over Tyson. Both Mathis and Douglas come from the mid-West. Douglas was given no chance just like Mathis: Douglas was 42-1. Mathis is 25-1.

No net gains from battle of Hastings

I t has always been a good fixture, England v Germany, and our record is sound. Fred Perry beat Gottfried von Cramm at Wimbledon and we took the World Cup in 1966 and while they are currently ahead in Formula One motor racing, we are murdering them in the triple jump.

I thought Hastings, where the contest was to take place, a strange choice... like France naming Agincourt as the venue for playing us at real tennis, as I made my way there I think I might have discovered what it was that undid us 929 years ago: the location. On the South Eastern line, Hastings is ten stops from Tunbridge Wells and if you need reinforcement when the day goes against you, speed of access and facility of approach are paramount.

At 7pm proceedings started



FREUD ON FRIDAY

In the most civilised manner: non-playing captain JMI Parker MBE led out our women's team, non-playing captain Desmond Douglas MBE was at the head of our men. The deputy mayor arrived to welcome both nations' representatives and shake their hands before we stood for the national anthems. Deutschland Über Alles played rather more quietly than God Save the Queen, but that may be because Germany is and Her Majesty needs all the help that is available.

"Thank you distinguished guests: it remains for me only to invite the team captains to wish each other good luck," a cultured voice over the public address system said.

Hastings sports centre is in Bohemia Road not far from the pier. The crowd was about 200, politely partisan and the men's and women's table tennis events take place simultaneously on the centre's adjoining courts.

Our men are striving for survival in the European league super division which they have graced for 20 years. Our women have had a successful time of it and are up there, near the top, fighting for honours. My mentor said: "Germany are tough competitors."

Each court is substantial in size with the table in the middle seeming almost an



Matthew Syed, of England, demonstrates his extraordinary service action during the defeat by Germany in the European table tennis league. Photograph: Andrew Hasson

irrelevance. A firm called Joola has sponsored the men's league so you have a Joola surface with Joola bats hitting Joola balls over Joola nets played dry their perspiring faces with Joola towels taken from the Joola linen cupboard. The women's league is provisioned by Butterfly of Japan.

It begins with the knock-up which is mind-blowing: if you

thought you play ping pong, watch ten seconds of knock-up — in the course of which the ball crosses the net and is returned 23 times, never rising more than an inch above the tape — and reconsider.

Each court is administered by a referee and two umpires: I watch Chen Xin Hua, who comes from Rotherham, though not originally, play a valiant game against Richard

Frause, who kept in constant eye contact with the German coach, who greeted every winning point regardless of whether it had been won by skill or unforced error with variations of "bravo" taken from the German Thesaurus: "Toll, frau, fein und ja mensch" all received their outings. Chen won in the third set. On the distaff court, Linton's Lisa Lomas lost to

Nicola Struse: I did not care for her eurythmics at 19-19 in the final game when her opponent was waiting to serve.

A match consists of seven games: three singles, one double then three more rearranged singles. The first team to get four wins takes the points. Our women succumbed by four games to nil. Our men put up a tremendous fight with Matthew Syed the player of the night. We lost by the odd game in seven, Syed having beaten both his opponents, winning his first game after trailing 18-12... not a position from which one tends to win.

But Syed from Reading via Balliol College, Oxford, where he took a First in politics, philosophy and economics, is no ordinary player. Having achieved some fame as an exponent of defence — he can

'A strange choice — like France using Agincourt as the venue for real tennis'

stand two full table-lengths behind the playing surface and nine times out of ten return smashes with stunning accuracy — he has now developed an attacking side to his game.

An outgoing, likeable, engaging man, he is toying with the idea of becoming the next prime minister but three. In the meantime he has signed for the French table tennis league club, Montpellier, and flies out to their matches, has three times won the \$10,000 Sears International in Chicago and is likely to qualify for one of the 64 places in the Atlanta Olympics at the Manchester eliminators next month.

In the days when 10,000 people watched table tennis at Wembley, he would have been a contender for Sports Personality of the Year: dark, handsome, athletic, fast with an indomitable will to win and the ability to come back from adversity, he also has one of the all-time punning serves. He stands at the side of the table, raises his right leg, digs in the left foot, throws up the ball and as it is about to disappear under the table his bat comes from the region of his jock strap and viciously spins the ball across the net as his arm brushes his side. He punctuates the serve by stamping his right foot on the floor. We shall hear a great deal about this man who will bring credit to British sport.

West Indies squaring up to the dilemma over Lara

By SIMON WILDE

CRICKET in the Caribbean has not known a crisis such as the one facing it now since Kerry Packer threw the game into worldwide turmoil 18 years ago. Whatever action the West Indies Cricket Board of Control takes against Brian Lara today, the island rivalries that have been inflamed by the on-going — and now very public — dispute between the West Indies team management and its leading player are unlikely to be brought to an end.

Since Lara precipitated the crisis last month by withdrawing at the eleventh hour from a minor tour of Australia, both sides have made their positions clear, the management through the unprecedented means of leaking confidential reports about the tour of England earlier this year.

Lara believes that weak management and insubordination among senior players have reached intolerable levels. Wes Hall, the West Indies manager, and Richie Richardson, the captain, think Lara is being damaged by his unparalleled commercial demands and has ambitions to captain the team himself, though one would have thought the added responsibility of captaincy was the last thing he needed.

The board is on a hiding to nothing, if it does not discipline Lara, and leaves the way open for him to rejoin the team for the World Cup in February. It will invite accusations of favouritism and further outspoken attacks. If it times or suspends Lara, it will make itself unpopular with many sections of the public and may further alienate a player it can ill afford to be without.

Lara has said that, even if he were invited to play in the World Cup, he would have to consider whether he should accept. Indeed, it is hard to see how he could work effectively again with Hall or Richardson, both of whom — like Andy Roberts, the coach — have been confirmed in their positions for the World Cup. But, when all is said and done, no governing body can allow itself to be dictated to by one player. Lara craves leadership and an end to insubordination. The West Indies board should make a start forthwith. Speaking from Australia, where his side is preparing to play Sri Lanka today, Richardson was anxious to play down the rift. "I want to focus on what we've got to do in the World Series," he said. "The Lara situation is behind us."

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This Refresher is about safety play. How would you set about Six Hearts on a diamond lead?



Contract: Six Hearts by South
Lead: Queen of Diamonds

Six Hearts is not much of a contract but it has improved considerably now that the declarer has escaped a club lead. How do you make use of your good fortune?

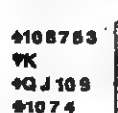
First you count your tricks — four in spades and two in diamonds. So if you can make six tricks in hearts you will be home. If the hearts are 3-2, you will only lose one trick in the suit. However, can you do anything if either defender holds king ten to four trumps?

Say East has that holding. If you take a finesse through him and play off the ace, he will still hold K 10, which will be worth two tricks against your

Q x. So is there any other 4-1 break that is relevant?

What if the singleton king is with West? Then it gains if you start with the ace. That way you succeed against all 3-2 breaks, and against those 4-1 breaks in which either the ten or the king is singleton. Playing the finesse loses against one of those combinations, that where West has the singleton king.

Hence, the correct line in Six Hearts is to take two top diamonds, discarding the king of clubs and then play ace and queen of hearts. This is the East-West distribution you are guarding against:



4108753

WK

QJ109

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KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Computer defeated

Garry Kasparov upheld the honour of human mental powers against the brute force of the silicon-based calculating machine in his two-game match against the Pentium processor-powered Fritz computer program in London on Wednesday. Kasparov took the honours with one win and one draw. The computer was able to calculate 10 million positions per minute and operated at 150MHz. However, this was not enough to save it against the champion's intense onslaught.

Here is Kasparov's win. Kasparov used psychology directed against Fritz. Mathias Feist, the human operator of the program: Kasparov's seventh move... Bb5 was very unusual. Playing the move 7... Bb7 is the accepted main line. Herr Feist from Hamburg assumed that Kasparov had, in fact, played 7... Bb7, the normal move and keyed this into the computer.

The result was that, until the error was discovered three moves later, the computer was analysing the wrong position and therefore played a number of unnecessary defensive moves. Having gained the advantage by this psychological play directed against human inattentiveness, rather than computer weakness, Kasparov fastened on White's shaky queenside and forced an easy victory.

White: Pentium processor/Fritz Black: Garry Kasparov Intel World Chess Man v Machine Competition, December 1995

Nimzo-Indian Defence 1 c4 Nf6

2 c4 Nf6

3 Nc3 Bb4

4 Qc2 0-0

5 a3 Bxc3+

6 Qxc3 b6

7 Bg5 Bxg5

8 a3 b5

9 Bb3 Nb7

10 Rd3 h6

11 Bb4 c5

12 Rd1 Rf6

13 Ne2 cxd4

14 Qxd4 Ne5

15 b3 Nxd3+

16 Qxd3 c5

17 Qc3 Ne4

18 Qc7+ Kc7

19 Bc3 Rb3

20 Ne4 Rxd4

21 Bxc4 Rxd4

22 Kc2 Rxd4

23 Kd2 Rxd4

24 Rb1 Rxd4

25 Kc2 Rxd4

26 Rb1 Rxd4

27 Rb3 Rxd4

28 Rb3 Rxd4

29 Kd3 Rxd4

30 Kd3 Rxd4

31 Rb3 Rxd4

32 Rb3 Rxd4

33 Kd3 Rxd4

34 Rb3+ Rxd4

35 Rb3 Rxd4

36 Rb3 Rxd4

37 Kd2 Rxd4

38 Rb3 Rxd4

39 Rb3 Rxd4

40 Rb3 Rxd4

41 Rb3 Rxd4

42 Rb3 Rxd4

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105 Rb3 Rxd4

106 Rb3 Rxd4

107 Rb3 Rxd4

108 Rb3 Rxd4

109 Rb3 Rxd4

110 Rb3 Rxd4

111 Rb3 Rxd4

112 Rb3 Rxd4

Sympathy, if reluctant, for the bedevilled

Ever since BBC's *Do the Right Thing* exposed the kind of amoral society we live in, I've been a bit wary of moral pronouncements. That astonishing series every week produced more gloomy news about the nation's moral grapple. Well, I don't know why I should be. Eighty per cent say Raskolnikov is right to kill the old lady! Terry Wogan would say, "Should the Samaritan walk by on the other side? Seventy-five per cent say a skateboard would be quicker."

Well, I wouldn't want to be in Janet Daley's shoes, that's all. The moral maze is something most people don't bother with: they hire a bulldozer and knock it down. Yet the film-makers and broadcasters continue to use the moral universe as a backdrop to their work, which is touchingly old-fashioned of them. As I mentioned last week, Thursday night's larky drama series *Ghostbusters of East Finchley* (BBC2) actually dares to sug-

gest that paying taxes has something to do with social responsibility. *Doctors in the Dock* (BBC2) turns on a delicate issue of medical ethics; and so on. I don't know why they bother; but I'm glad they do.

Pride of place last night went to Channel 4's fascinating *Secret Lives*, which this week did its damndest to uncover material on Howard Hughes — the human André puppy of Las Vegas. The point about Hughes was that he was evil, corrupt, paranoid and megalomaniac, but at the same time pitiful. So, perverse as always, *Secret Lives* left you feeling sorry for a monster who bribed governments; while despising an old man in shorts and toggle (Baden-Powell, last week) who gave the world nothing more dangerous than dib-dib-dib.

Despite the paranoid seclusion, Hughes still influenced politics; still achieved tax avoidance — a dream of East Finchley. His old

bodyguards and surveillance men now came forward to speak, but their first-hand contributions were overshadowed by a wizened Austrian psychoanalyst — probably a woman, though it was hard to tell — who pronounced on Hughes without ever having met him. "He vanishes attention, but he is afraid of being looked at." "He loves money, but he has hated and envied; so he wishes to enslave and destroy." Hughes used to insist that his young female protégées avoid the level crossing on Santa Monica Boulevard, because looting on rail tracks was bad for their breasts. For once, the shrink had nothing to add.

The case of Nigel Cox on *Doctors in the Dock* (BBC2) was rather more subtle. In 1991, he administered a lethal injection to a woman dying in great pain from rheumatoid arthritis. Subsequently, he was

shocked when a fearful jury found him guilty. It is odd when intelligent people can't get their heads around something as simple as this. With hindsight, Dr Cox objected: "The reason I got into trouble was because I recorded what I did in the notes," a depressingly petulant attitude. It needs no Austrian psychoanalyst to tell him, no the real reason you got into trouble was that you made free with the potassium chloride.

Morally, many people would be on the side of Dr Cox. It seems to have been a clear-cut case of compassion in action, the dead woman's family have always endorsed his act. When the General Medical Council addressed the case, they surprised Dr Cox and his wife (again) by supporting him, and not striking him off the register. But quite properly, the GMC was more interested in the extenuating circumstances; it also understood that doctors have no

time in their daily lives for musing. "Do I have the right to do this? Perhaps nature should take its course?" The role of medicine, after all, is to prevent nature taking its course. That's why it was invented.

Not a lot of laughs, then? I'm afraid not. Perhaps I was just looking for trouble, but Public Eye (BBC2) likewise concerned a simple question of legal infringement. The subject was flyposting, "a twilight world of intimidation" in which the feeble prohibition "Bill stickers will be prosecuted" is a source of mirth. Rival gangs of flyposters contend for the prime sites and things turn nasty, because the business is not only easy (if you have a big brush and a bucket) but lucrative too. For every poster stuck on a shopfront, Bill Sticker gets £120. Record companies and band promoters revel in the cheapness of the advertising and in fact appear

offensively smug when questioned about their role. Meanwhile, pensioners in the Rushmore district of Manchester attack poster sites with petitions and wallpaper scrapers, which in the context of this "twilight world of intimidation" looks terribly unwise.

It was a good story for a half-hour current affairs programme. John Taylor hit the streets of Sheffield in the company of Mike Faal, a man who has cornered the flyposting in northern cities so successfully that the council in Sheffield has virtually licensed him to get on with it, and to control the undesirable. Faal came across as a bit of a hero, though as a contributor to *Do the Right Thing* he would certainly have his limitations. One of the angry pensioners confronted him and asked how he defended this illegal despoliation of our streets. And he was ready for this question. "It's a way for me to make money," he said.

REVIEW



Lynne Truss

found guilty of attempted murder, but he struck off. Now he sits in a chair before a fire and told his side of the story. In an appalling difficult circumstances, and with every humane intention, he had deliberately administered potassium chloride to help the woman to die.

The question was not a moral one; it was legal. The law may be wrong, but Dr Cox broke it. Yet he and his wife were genuinely

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (31283)
 - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (47898963)
 - 9.10am Kilroy (s) (6192363)
 - 10.00am News (Ceefax) and weather (5712919)
 - 10.05am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (6735450)
 - 10.30am Good Morning with Anne and Nick (s) (40863)
 - 12.00pm News (Ceefax) regional news and weather (581841)
 - 12.05pm Pebble Mill (s) (574573)
 - 12.50pm Regional News and weather (54610318)
 - 1.00pm One O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (10641)
 - 1.30pm Neighbours (Ceefax) (s) (96153457)
 - 1.50pm Columbo (s) (6017573)
 - 3.05pm Timekeepers (s) (6740136) 3.30pm Jim Henson's Animal Show (s) (1584370) 3.55pm The Itsy Bitsy Spider (s) (9145283) 4.15pm Julia Jekyll and Harriet Hyde (Ceefax) (s) (1889221) 4.35pm Record Breakers (1142931)
 - 5.00pm Newsround (Ceefax) (3583738)
 - 5.10pm Blue Peter (Ceefax) (s) (114039)
 - 5.35pm Neighbours (s) (Ceefax) (s) (623047) NORTHERN IRELAND: 5.35pm Inside Ulster
 - 6.00pm Six O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (468)
 - 6.30pm Regional News magazines (738)
 - 7.00pm The World's Strongest Men. The fourth of five qualifying heats in this year's competition (Ceefax) (s) (1863)
 - 7.30pm Tomorrow's World. News on science and technology. (Ceefax) (s) (960)
 - 8.00pm Wildlife on One. Malice in Wonderland. A look underwater at the coral reef in the Red Sea and the battle for survival that goes on there (s) (Ceefax) (s) (7263)
 - 8.30pm A Question of Sport. Bill Beaumont and Ian Botham captain two teams of sporting celebrities answering questions put by David Coleman (Ceefax) (s) (6318)
 - 9.00pm Nine O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (2950)
 - 9.30pm Dangerfield. Joanna Franks out at Paul has a secret life (Ceefax) (s) (114039) WALE: 9.30pm The Way It Is (588757) 10.00pm Film: Shattered (9321844) 12.25pm Film: Taste the Blood of Dracula (184622) 2.00pm News headlines and weather (8976803)
- BBC2**
- 6.00am Technology season: Great Egg Race (81778) 6.30pm Great Experiments (75090)
 - 7.00am Breakfast News (Ceefax and signing) (9039778)
 - 7.15pm Lassie (2731592) 7.40pm Albert The 5th Musketeer (s) (Ceefax) (s) (7653134) 8.05pm Smart (s) (Ceefax) (s) (2021009) 8.35pm The Record (s) (7454115)
 - 9.00pm At the Risk of Our Lives (3231196) 9.50pm True Life's Tricks of the Trade (3012028) 10.00pm Playdays (7185991)
 - 10.25pm FILM: Old Man Rhythms (1935 b/w) Musical with Charles "Buddy" Rogers. Directed by Edward Ludwig (8888950)
 - 11.40pm The Fugitive (b/w) (4419931) 12.30pm Working Lunch (79757) 1.00pm William's Wish Wellingtons (28050283) 1.05pm Johnson and Friends (4888721) 1.15pm Movie Magic (4444339) 1.40pm Even More of Glynis Christian's Entertaining Microwave (1542631) 1.55pm Understanding Cats (15416554) 2.10pm Sport on Friday (650950)
 - 3.55pm News (Ceefax) (9520399)
 - 4.00pm Today's the Day (9741) 4.30pm Ready, Steady, Cook (863) 5.00pm Esther (8641) 5.30pm Sell in Steady (670080) 5.45pm Turning Points (801979) 5.50pm Human Rights, Human Wrongs (882844)
 - 6.00pm The Murresters (b/w) (Ceefax) (147283)
 - 6.25pm The New Avengers (Ceefax) (520318)
 - 7.15pm Football, Fussball, Voetbal. Next year's European Championship (803573)
 - 8.00pm Top Gear Motorsport (Ceefax) (s) (5625)
 - 8.30pm Secret Nature. Andrew Cooper continues his exploration of the English Channel (7660)
 - 9.00pm Not the Nine O'Clock News (s) (Ceefax) (5172)

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- CHOICE**
- 6.00am GMTV (8578912)
 - 9.25pm Supermarket Sweep (s) (8854912)
 - 9.55pm London Today (Teletext) (4735270)
 - 10.00pm The Time... The Place (s) (2430979)
 - 10.35pm This Morning (28467405)
 - 12.20pm London Today (Teletext) (8514825)
 - 12.30pm ITN Lunchtime News (Teletext) (2372663)
 - 12.55pm Home and Away (Teletext) (2357554)
 - 1.25pm Coronation Street (s) (Teletext) (44453688)
 - 1.55pm Shortland Street (86174950)
 - 2.20pm The Chrystal Rose Show (s) (18022931)
 - 2.55pm High Road. Isabel is devastated when Alun leaves Glenardoch for Blackpool (Teletext) (5500486)
 - 3.20pm ITN News headlines (Teletext) (8088573)
 - 3.25pm London Today (Teletext) (8087844)
 - 3.30pm Jays World (s) (3707912) 3.45pm Mumsie's White Christmas (336739)
 - 4.15pm Tiny Toon Adventures (1885641) 4.40pm Fun House (Teletext) (s) (1428931)
 - 5.10pm LWT — Caring at Christmas (2468844)
 - 5.40pm ITN News and weather (887370)
 - 6.00pm Home and Away. Dylan, Angel and Shane prepare for the trip of a lifetime (s) (Teletext) (141005)
 - 6.25pm London Tonight (Teletext) (875405)
 - 7.00pm Family Fortunes. Lee Dennis introduces two more families as they compete for prizes and the jackpot (Teletext) (s) (86931)
- CARLTON**
- 6.00am GMTV (8578912)
 - 9.25pm Supermarket Sweep (s) (8854912)
 - 9.55pm London Today (Teletext) (4735270)
 - 10.00pm The Time... The Place (s) (2430979)
 - 10.35pm This Morning (28467405)
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 - 6.25pm London Tonight (Teletext) (875405)
 - 7.00pm Family Fortunes. Lee Dennis introduces two more families as they compete for prizes and the jackpot (Teletext) (s) (86931)

- CHANNEL 4**
- 6.30am Ulysses 31 Cartoon series (s) (44496)
 - 7.00pm The Big Breakfast (33592)
 - 9.00pm FILM: Rhapsody in Blue (1845). Fictionalised film biography of composer George Gershwin, played in his film debut by Robert Alton. Directed by Irving Rapper (71540679)
 - 11.35pm Peta Smith Specialities (2541844)
 - 12.00pm Simply the Best (s) (48399)
 - 12.30pm Sesame Street with dancer Arthur Mitchell (17860) 1.30pm Katie and Orbie (s) (63196) 2.00pm Second Chance Sea (60336318)
 - 2.15pm FILM: Junior Miss (1945). A teenager tries to prevent her father from having what she mistakes for a fling with the boss's daughter. With Peggy Ann Garner. Written and directed by George Seaton (651889)
 - 4.00pm Think Tank (Teletext) (s) (937)
 - 4.30pm Fifteen To One (Teletext) (s) (931)
 - 5.00pm The Factory (s) (Teletext) (s) (7050582)
 - 5.45pm Holy Places (s) (Teletext) (s) (970592)
 - 6.00pm Blossom (s) (Teletext) (s) (196)
 - 6.30pm Moviewatch (Teletext) (s) (776)
 - 7.00pm Channel 4 News (Teletext) (431370)
 - 7.55pm Book Choice (Teletext) (s) (777028)
 - 8.00pm Choice. Bus Stop. A day in the life of Victoria Coach Station (Teletext) (3221)
 - 8.30pm Brookside. Rosie hits rock-bottom (Teletext) (s) (8028)
 - 9.00pm Dressing for Breakfast. Comedy of contemporary female sexual mores. (Teletext) (s) (5680)
 - 9.30pm Rising Damp: Clunk Clunk. Classic comedy with Leonard Rossiter and Richard Beckinsale (s) (Teletext) (84689)
 - 10.00pm Frasier: Dark Victory. Sharp, lapidary American comedy about a radio psychologist (Teletext) (s) (49028)
 - 10.30pm Clive Anderson Talks Back. The chatterbox is joined by Reg Presley, Alex Hammond, Mr. and Mrs. Tim Rice (s) (787399)
 - 11.15pm Crapton Villies Adult animation by the creators of Spilling Image (s) (183950)
 - 11.30pm Eurotrash — The World Tour Antoine de Caunes and Jean Paul Gaultier body-surf into realms beyond taste (s) (80912)
 - 12.00pm Beavis and Butt-head Pop videos (s) (86603)

- ANGLIA**
- As London except: 12.55-1.25pm Coronation Street (236754) 1.25pm Home and Away (236754) 1.50pm Country Practice (28218912) 2.25-3.25pm Murder, She Wrote (28218912) 3.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 3.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 4.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 4.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 5.10pm The Shadow (28218912) 5.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 5.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 6.10pm The Shadow (28218912) 6.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 6.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 7.10pm The Shadow (28218912) 7.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 7.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 8.10pm The Shadow (28218912) 8.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 8.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 9.10pm The Shadow (28218912) 9.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 9.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 10.10pm The Shadow (28218912) 10.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 10.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 11.10pm The Shadow (28218912) 11.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 11.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 12.10pm The Shadow (28218912) 12.30pm The Shadow (28218912) 12.55pm The Shadow (28218912) 1.00pm The 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Inexperienced attack justifies manager's decision to gamble

Martin swings Test England's way

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN DURBANDURBAN (first day of five.
South Africa won the toss;
South Africa have scored 139
for five

AN HOUR into this critical third Test, England's selection policy looked condemned. After much agonising, they had chosen to dispense with the experience in their attack and the word that sprang readily to mind was reckless. Yet, by the end of this baffling day, shortened by almost two hours through bad light, the strategy was vindicated and South Africa were distinctly vulnerable, relying once more on their regular rearguard pairing of Jonty Rhodes and Brian McMillan.

The transformation was hard to explain. From 54 without loss, proceeding with the serenity of those profiting from the errors of others, South Africa lost five wickets for 35. While giving due credit to a sudden and essential improvement in the bowling, it should be recorded that the Kingsmead pitch, subject of so much sinister speculation, behaved impeccably and that three of the wickets were

donated by irrational strokes.

The main beneficiary was Peter Martin, who had woken with hope rather than expectation of playing his fourth Test match. When his first two overs cost 17 runs, including four successive cover-driven fours by Andrew Hudson, Martin might himself have begun to share the general scepticism over the omission of both Devon Malcolm and Angus Fraser, respectively the hammer and chisel of England's established attack.

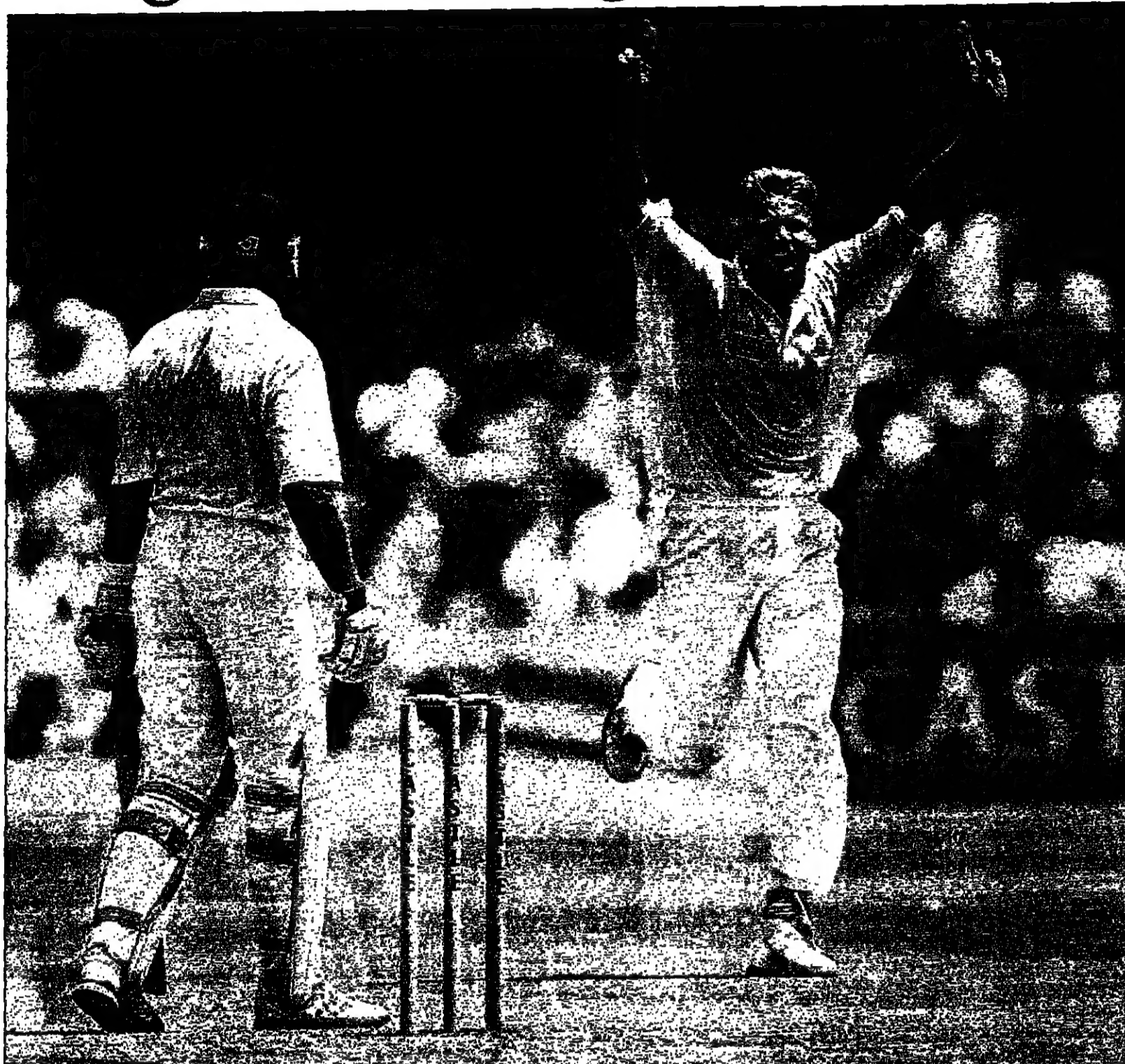
It had, unquestionably, been an adventurous selection by the manager, Raymond Illingworth, but it was not without logic. He judged that the pitch would be too easy-paced for Malcolm and too true for Fraser. He reasoned that any help would come from swing and so, in Martin and Mark Ilett, he identified the men to capitalise.

The drawbacks were that this pair had only six caps between them. Nerves were inevitable, early waywardness unsurprising. While Dominic Cork bowled his customary confrontational spell with the new ball, runs flowed freely from the end.

To his credit, Michael Atherton — who would also have chosen to bat first — did not let matters drift. Ilett was withdrawn after five overs and Martin, following those two chastening overs, was promptly switched so that the strong cross-wind assisted his away-swing. His line improved instantly and he began to make better use of his height. Gary Kirsten, bemused during Hudson's surge, cut impulsively at a ball of steep bounce and Graeme Hick grabbed the catch high to his left at second slip.

At the time, this seemed no more than a temporary reprieve. But the day would not be the same again, for now England applied pressure from both ends. Richard Illingworth, summoned as early as the 16th over, found no turn but his recently acquired ability to torment through flight brought rich rewards.

Hudson had scored his 45 from a ball fewer than Kirsten required to make eight and looked set for overdue correction of an abysmal Test record against England when he offered no shot to Illingworth's arm ball. David Orchard, umpiring his first Test, confi-



Martin is elated after having Kallis, the South African newcomer, caught behind for his third wicket. Photograph: Graham Morris

dently upheld England's appeal for a catch at silly point off pad and glove.

Six, tense overs later, Illingworth took a still more influential wicket. Hansie Cronje, who has yet to impose himself on the series, made what looked a pre-determined attempt to hit Illingworth over the infield and was instead caught comfortably at mid-on by Martin. Illingworth, who

once played a winter on this ground for Natal, now had two wickets for five and England adjourned for lunch with spirits soaring.

Darryl Cullinan bats by instinct; he is not the man for the innings of retrenchment. Fortunately to survive a leg-before appeal in the first over of the afternoon, when he, too, shouldered arms to Illingworth, he made only one more

run before driving impulsively at Martin and giving Robin Smith a straightforward catch at cover.

Rhodes was now joined by the debutant, Jacques Kallis. This was a nice irony as the morning newspaper in Natal had staged a phone-in calling for Rhodes, one of their own, to make way for the younger man. In the event, the selectors played them both and Rhodes

nothing if not a survivor, comfortably outlasted the pretender to his place.

Kallis could hardly be blamed, for he received the ball of the day, a classical outswinger from Martin that demanded a stroke and took a thin edge. Martin had now taken three for 12 in 9.3 overs since changing ends but England knew better than to believe they were in command

with McMillan striding in.

Absurdly low in the order for one who has comfortably the highest batting average in the side, McMillan's presence was massively reassuring for a team in crisis. When fading light and thunder curtailed play soon after tea, he had added 50 with Rhodes and given a 15,000 crowd reason for bewilderment at what had gone before.

Carling to
take the
lead by
signing
contractBY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

WILL CARLING, the England captain since 1988, led the way into rugby union's new era yesterday when he reached agreement with the Rugby Football Union (RFU) over a professional contract. Last night, Carling was confident of signing and the RFU expects the squad which will play Western Samoa tomorrow to follow suit.

Solicitors representing the players and the union believe the contracts to be fair and equitable. The settlement will have the dual effect of clearing the air prior to the international and quelling any threat from proponents of an unofficial super league in Europe.

"I understand that players have to consider all sorts of offers, but I have made up my mind," Carling said. "It's up to each player to decide, but it [the European League] is not something I believe is a viable option. Their sort of contract means they own you lock, stock and barrel."

"I prefer to stay here in London and play rugby with Harlequins. No one can predict what will happen in the next year, but I think top players will be doing very well anyway and they will still have flexibility in their lives."

Carling admitted that contractual discussions had deflected from the international preparations but declined to discuss the attitude adopted by his colleagues. However, the RFU is confident that agreement in principle has been achieved and has no intention of forcing the issue.

The Samoans' tour ends after the game at Twickenham tomorrow, but, though their immediate future is brighter than six months ago, they will reappear to the International Rugby Football Board settlement fund for money to ensure the game's development. "But the process seems a long-winded one," Bryan Williams, their coach, said. "We need the money now."

Even if they finish bottom of the Courage Clubs Championship second division, Newcastle will not be relegated. The RFU last night resolved to preserve the status quo, whereby no team will go down to division three.

Sports Letters, page 36
Charismatic captain, page 38

SCOREBOARD

South Africa won toss

SOUTH AFRICA First Innings
G Kirsten c Hick b Martin 8
(70min, 82 balls, 9 fours)
A C Hudson c Crawley b Illingworth 46
(80min, 63 balls, 9 fours)
W J Cronje c Martin b Illingworth 8
(29min, 17 balls, 1 four)
D J Cullinan c Smith b Martin 10
(64min, 60 balls, 2 fours)
J N Rhodes not out 36
(142min, 102 balls, 4 fours)
J H Kallis c Russell b Martin 1
(12min, 12 balls)
B M McMillan not out 26
(87min, 68 balls, 3 fours)
Extras (lb 5) 5
Total (5 wickets, 84 overs, 265 mins) 139

ENGLAND First Innings
M A Atherton c A A Donald b M
Matthews 138
D J Richardson c S M Pollock b
Matthews 45
C R Matthews and A A Donald b M
Matthews 45

FALL OF WICKETS 1-54 (Hudson 45, 2-56 (Cronje 8), 3-73 (Cullinan 8), 4-85 (Rhodes 8), 5-88 (Rhodes 12)

BOWLING Cork 19-10-1-0 (9-5-16-4, 3-2-4-0, 7-3-14-0); Kallis 9-1-24-0 (5-1-15-0, 3-0-0-0); Martin 13-4-31-3 (2-0-17-0, 4-1-6-1, 7-3-5-2); Illingworth 22-8-33-2 (one spell), Hick 2-0-5-0 (one spell)

LUNCH 76-3 (31 overs, 122min) Cullinan 9, Rhodes 2 Test: 136-5 (82 overs, 242min) Rhodes 34, McMillan 26. Bad light, stopped play at 2.40pm

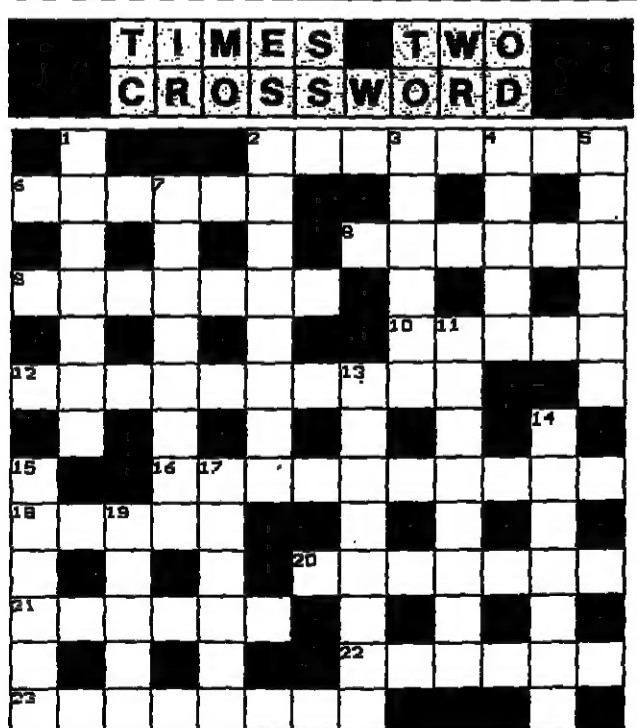
ENGLAND "M A Atherton, A J Stewart, J P Crawley, G P Thorpe, G A Hick, R A Smith, M C Ilett, R K Illingworth"

Umpires S A Bucknor (West Indies) and D J Orchard (TV replay umpire); K Liebenberg, Match referee: C H Lloyd (West Indies)

RESULTS First Test (Pretoria): drawn Second Test (Johannesburg): drawn

TESTS TO COME Fourth (Port Elizabeth): Dec 26 to 30 Fifth (Cape Town): Jan 2 to 6

Compiled by Bill Fildral



No 653

ACROSS

- 2 To batter (6,2)
- 6 Foreman (slang); film electrician (6)
- 8 Latex; eraser (6)
- 9 Talk over (7)
- 10 Mexican empire, fell to Cortes (5)
- 12 Our era; advancing age (joc) (4,6)
- 16 Relentless (eg effort) (10)
- 18 Illegal activities (5)
- 20 Make faster, quicker (7)
- 21 Coloured cotton print (6)
- 22 Willow flower (6)
- 23 Amaze (8)

DOWN

- 1 Beaming with joy (7)
- 3 Dismiss; rudely ignore (5,3)
- 5 Bird with big colourful beak (6)
- 4 Disprove (argument) (5)
- 5 Illegal seizure of ship (6)
- 7 Man of all work (8)
- 11 Babylonian stepped tower (8)
- 13 To the extent that (8)
- 14 Meantime (7)
- 15 Spiny tropical tree (6)
- 17 Sir Isaac — mathematician (6)
- 19 Stupid person (5)

The solution to 652 will be published Wednesday, December 20

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Counties reject Illingworth's plea

BY SIMON WILDS

THERE was little encouraging news from headquarters for Raymond Illingworth yesterday. Representatives of the county cricket clubs listened with interest to the suggestion that the England manager should have ultimate authority over their players, and rejected it. And dual-qualified players, like Andrew Symonds, are not going to be prevented from playing their trade here, despite the introduction of a revised declaration for them to sign.

Illingworth looks seriously on the powers available to his counterparts in other countries, who can order a player to be rested from a domestic competition to preserve him for international fixtures. He watched with frustration as Yorkshire and Darren Gough defied his wishes last summer.

The winter meeting of the Test and County Cricket Board, which concluded at Lord's yesterday, decided that it would be more "appropriate" if the matter was

left to the discretion of the county concerned. They advocated "discussion" between the parties.

As for the Birmingham-born Symonds, Gloucestershire were still anticipating last night that he will take up a three-year contract with them in the spring, barring selection in the meantime for Australia, where he was raised. If he does so, he will be required to sign a new declaration stating that it is not his "desire or intention to play cricket for any country outside the European Community and

MAIN CHANGES FOR 1996

County championship: overs reduced from 110 to 104 on first three days, and from 102 to 96 on fourth day. Prize-money increased by £48,000 to £155,000 to cover first nine finishers. Use of heavy roller permitted.

Benson and Hedges Cup: innings reduced from 55 to 50 overs; one 45-minute interval.

NatWest Trophy: separate start days for semi-finals.

accordingly I will not play, and I am not seeking, and will not seek, to qualify to play cricket at any level for any such country."

While this puts a greater moral obligation on Symonds to commit himself to English cricket, there would still be no legal redress if he subsequently decided to play for Australia.

The meeting concentrated on the cricket committee's review of four-day cricket and followed most of its recommendations. The most notable rebuffs were the powers it wanted given to Illingworth and a complete ban on overseas players from 1999. The latter issue will be discussed again in the spring.

The committee's advice was taken on changes to the domestic competitions, notably a reduction in the number of overs per day in the championship, prize-money extending to nine places and the option to use a heavy roller. By 1997, most championship matches should be starting on Wednesdays.

BAF tightens Olympic selection format

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

IN WHAT was described by the British Athletic Federation (BAF) as "a vigorous tightening up of the system", the governing body announced yesterday a return to the Olympic trials format that put Sebastian Coe out of contention for a third successive 1,500 metres title in the Eighties.

However, far from being controversial, the change has been welcomed by Britain's athletes. Some 177 competitors communicated their response to the federation. "The policy certainly reflects input from the athletes," Geoff Parsons, the Commonwealth Games high jump bronze medal-winner, said.

For the Olympic Games in Atlanta next year, the first two athletes in each event at the trials, who are eligible for

Great Britain and Northern Ireland, will be guaranteed places in the team, provided the qualification standard has been met. Athletes finishing in the first two, but without qualifying marks, will give way to those lower down who do possess them.

For the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, only the winning athlete was assured of a place, the remaining two being allocated at the selectors' discretion. That system has been in operation for every international championship since the Seoul Olympics of 1988, while the BAF has attempted, without success, to conceal the holes in its policy.

"The system was being abused," Tony Ward, the BAF spokesman, said. "Hence the move towards these two sig-

nificant changes." The other change is the stipulation that athletes must compete in the event or events for which they wish to be selected. If Linford Christie wants to compete in the 100 and 200 metres in Atlanta, he will need to run both at the trials in Birmingham in June.

Now it is back to the 1988 format by which Coe failed to make Olympic selection. He was knocked out in the heats but, under a first-past-the-post system, would probably have been named instead of Steve Cram, who was second in the trial, to join Steve Cram and Peter Elliott.

The selectors have retained a safety clause whereby, in "exceptional circumstances", they can make "value judgments" over selections. How-

ever, the new policy should help to eliminate any abuse.

Too often, athletes have fulfilled the requirement to compete in the trials without taking part in their main event. Last year, Steve Smith, the British high jump record-holder, competed in the long jump instead. In the world championship trials, Colin Jackson ran the 100 metres. Or, he started to, but did not finish, claiming injury, only to run for money in Italy the next day. Jackson was selected subject to proving fitness, failed to do so, and did not defend his hurdles world title.

The "tough policy" is designed partly to reduce controversy, Parsons said he did not believe the policy held any concerns, but added: "There will always be difficult cases."

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